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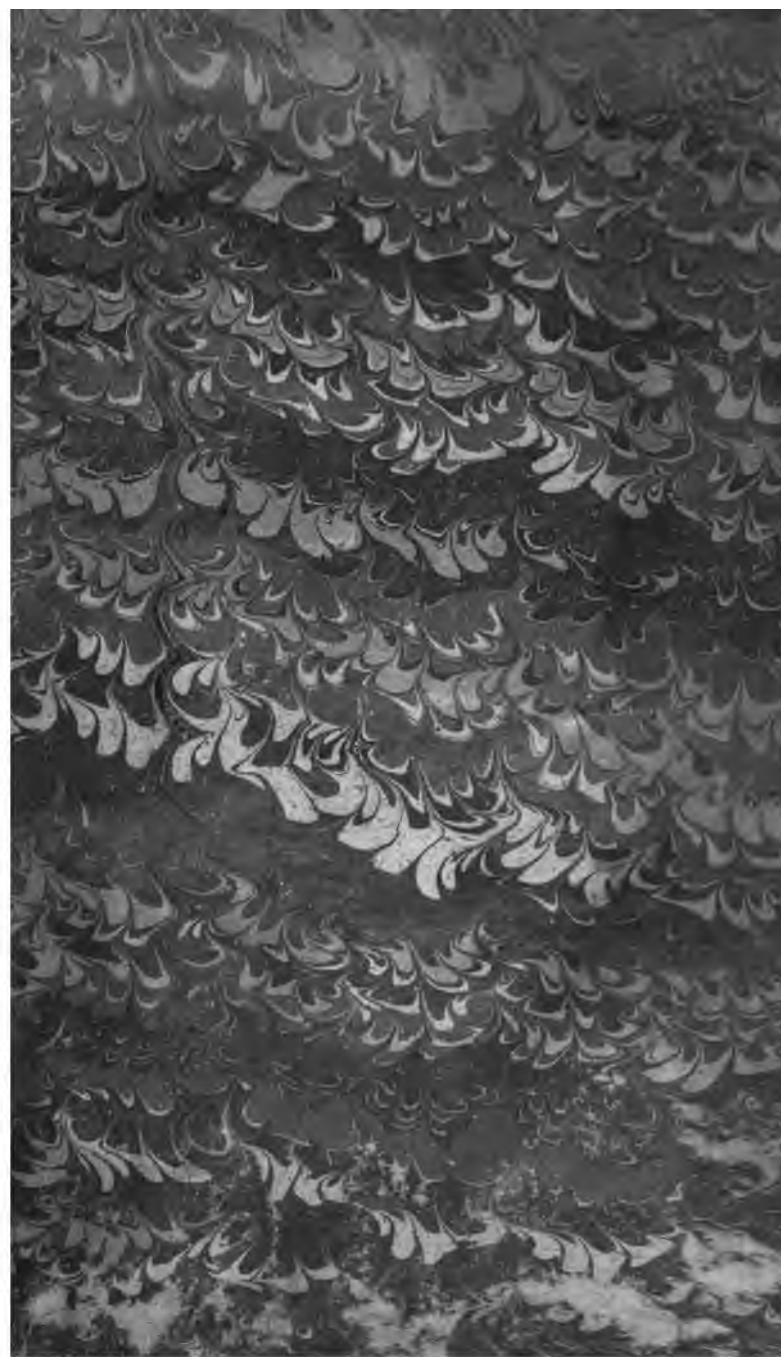
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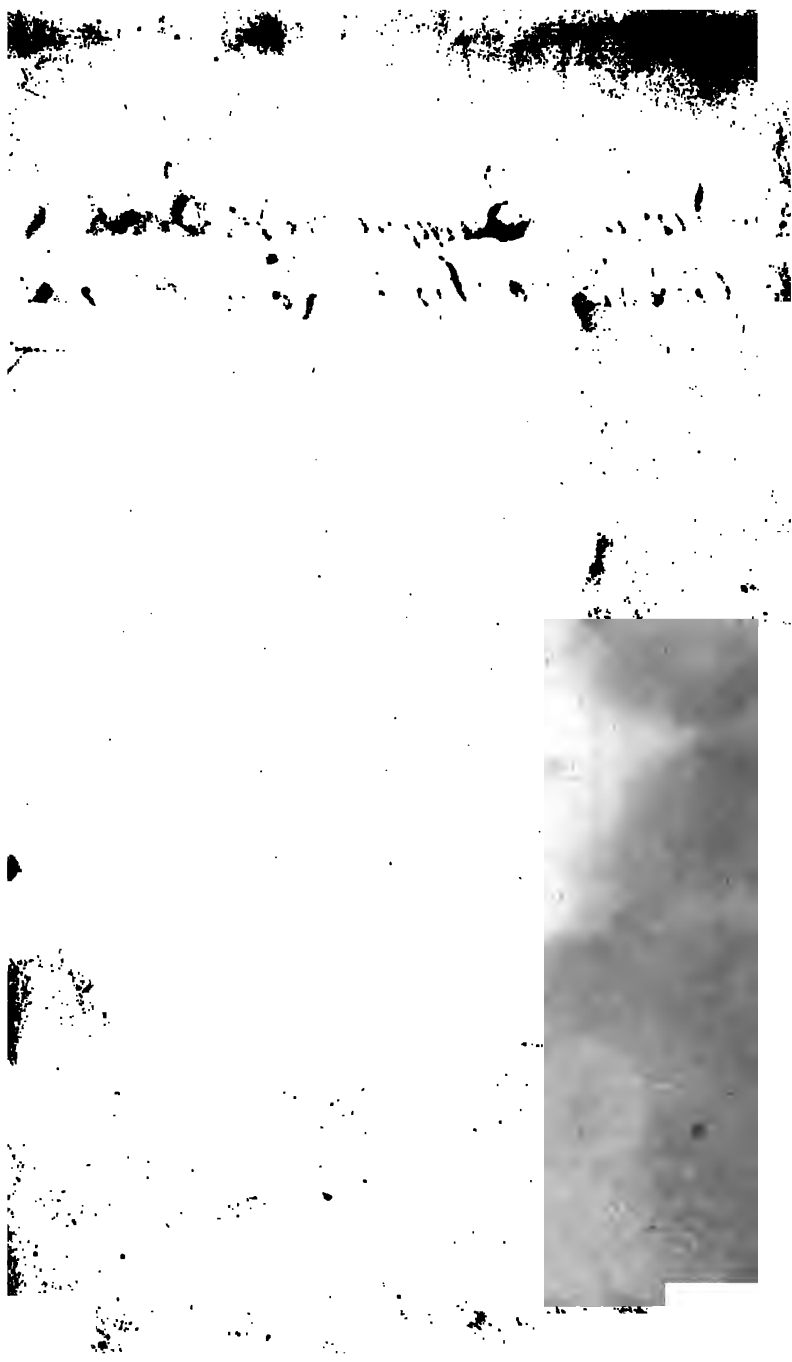




at

12/11





My dear Duggie her Book is
given to her Love 1720

G R O T I U S
H I S
A R G U M E N T S

For the Truth of
Christian Religion;
Rendred into plain *Engliſh Verſe*.

*Ubi quid datur or̃
Illudo chartis; hoc eſt mediocribus illis
Ex vitiis unum*

Hor. Sermon. Lib. 1. Sat. 4.

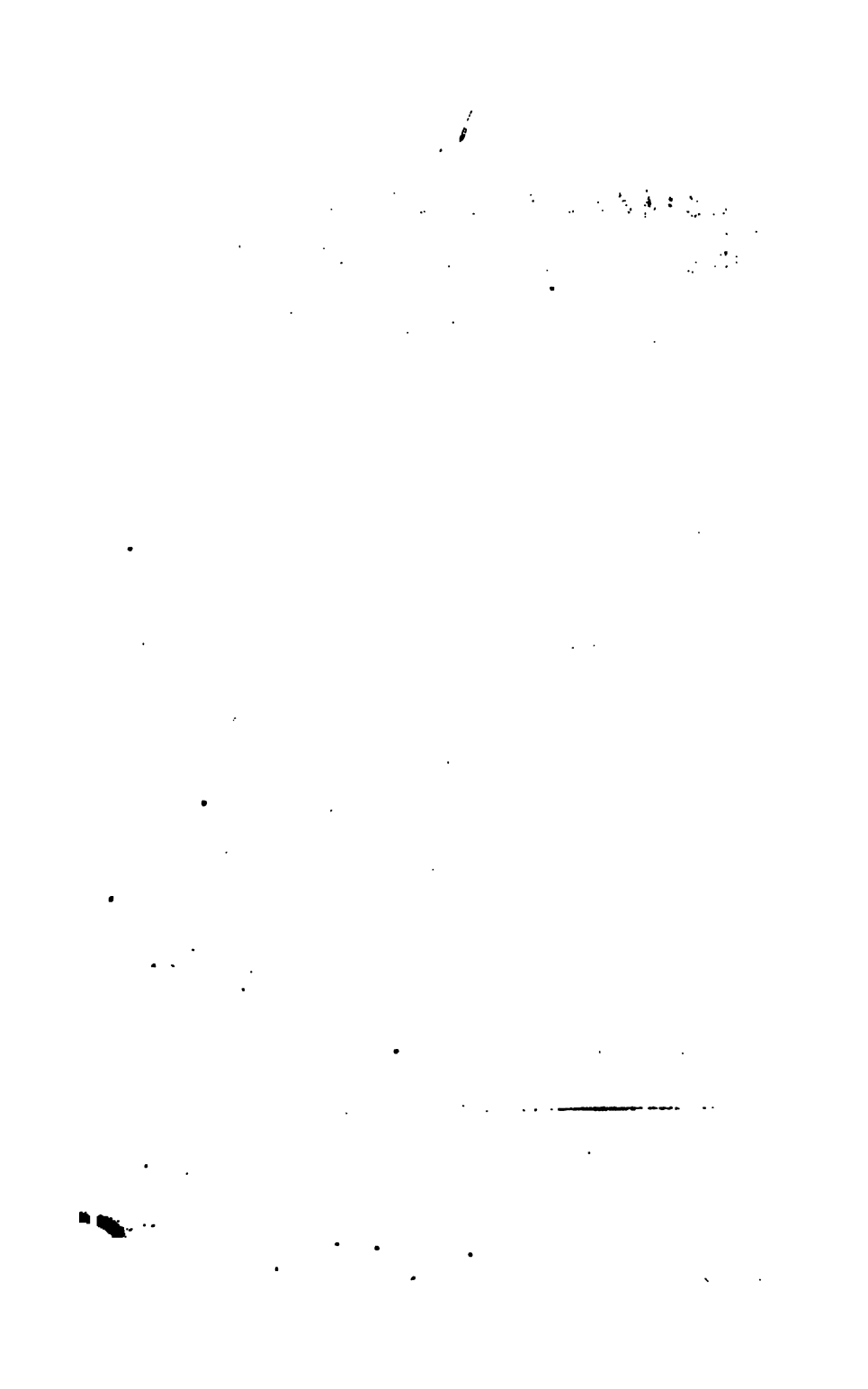
I M P R I M A T U R,

Dec. 16.
1685.

Z. Iſham.

L O N D O N :

Printed for Jonathan Robinson, at the
Golden Lion in St. Paul's Church-
Yard. MDC LXXXVI.





To the Honourable

ROBERT BOYLE, Esq;

Since your Command seem'd to
suppose me fit ;
To this Attempt I could not but
submit :

How difficult soe're, who could refuse,
When such Encouragement supplies a
Muse ?

Yet this that leisure and recess requires,
Which one, of Avocati'ons, but desires
If I could envy what I truly love,
Or rev'rence rather, as advanc'd above ;
Your Life, your *Genius*, would that En-
vy raise,

Happy beyond my hope, beyond my
Praise.

Did not this Great Civilian (a) Verse (a) Vid. Grot,
adorn, Poemata.

My Vein, whate're it were, might
merit Scorn,

As if I were to nothing better born :

A 2

By

To the Honourable Robert Boyl, Esq;

By it I never can expect a Name;
And most Men may my wronging *Grotius* blame;

While the ill-natur'd Criticks often
smile,

(b) Vid. Grot.
ad Bignonium,
p. 1. *Patria*
meae sermon.
p. 3. *versibus*
inclusi.

To find his (b) *Dutch* excel our *English*
Stile.

If I can lull the Cares of Life asleep,
'Tis the chief benefit I look to reap:
While you, of all the wise Man's Joys
possess,

Out of the reach of mortal chances, rest:
From whence, with so much charming
force, do flow

Treasures of Knowledg unto us below.

Had not your choice anticipated Mine,

(c) Vid. *Consi-*
derat. about the
reconcilableness
of Reason and
Religion. ed. An.
1675.

I might have mingled Dross where (c)
you refine,

Embasing with low Verse that Chain
of thought,

By which to Faith Reason's Subjecti'on
taught,

And the sublimest Truths to its em-
braces brought.

To

To the Reader.

WERE it my expectation, or design, to gain a Reputation for Verse, I should have chosen a Subject more suited to move the Affections; without humouring of which, the smoothest Rythms please the the generality no better than Pictures in dead Colours.

Non fatis est pulchra esse Poemata Hor. de arte
dulcia sunt, Poet.
Et quocunq; volent animum auditoris agunto.

*Verse should be soft, and sweet, as well as
fair,
Moving the ravish'd Soul like fluid Air.*

Yet as those Commands, which ennoble these Endeavours, were entirely with respect to publick benefit: if I can attain that end, tho with the censure of being an ill Poet, or what perhaps would be worse for me, a tolerable good one; I shall be content, with King David dancing before the Ark, to appear vile, or like one of the 2 Sam. 6. 20,
vain Fellows. I must confess, I had not 22.
finish'd this Task, before I met with a
A ? Transla-

To the Reader.

Translation of this Book into English Prose, by an excellent Hand, which might have seem'd justly to supersede my farther Progress. But I cannot but believe that many may be willing to divert themselves with this, who would think the other not sufficiently entertaining; for which I take leave to apply that of the admirable Herbert;

A Verse may find him who a Sermon flies,
And turn delight into a Sacrifice.

Measure is at least an art of Memory, an help for the treasuring up those thoughts which may enrich our Minds; such I am sure Grotius's are; and what so well deserve to be thought on more than once, that I am confident many, who have read both the Latin and English Prose, nay, and the original Dutch Verse too, will not think their time lost in reading the same Arguments repeated, in such a way as I have represent'd that Impression which they made upon my Mind. Wherein I must needs say, I never labour'd for a second Thought, if the first, without offending against the common rules, or (a) practice of Verse, seem'd clearly to express Grotius's Sense; nor hunted about for taking Epithets, or Flowers; but left Truth, and dry reasoning, to their natural Energy, if not Graces.

(a) This warrants the frequent use of a Verse two Feet longer than the rest.

To the Reader.

I cannot but flatter my self, that in several places I have removed some Clouds, and made the Arguments more easy to be comprehended, by taking from their length.

The Truths here propounded, are of that nature, that me-thinks the Mind should be eager to come to the proof of them, and impatient even of Ornaments which may detain from the full view of their delightful Features.

If however this Version appear dull and flat, I hope it will be considered that it is but a Copy of a Copy; and if I had understood the Original Dutch Poem, as I should have had more assistance to Fancy, I know not but I might have offered here something more Poetical.

Yet still it must have been as careless and unlabour'd as now it is, unless I could have stolen more time from a Life not unactive, than I fear the Critiques will think, I have already but thrown away on this occasion.

Ad Virum Ornatissimum ——— de
Veritate Christianæ Religionis ab eo-
dem in Versus Anglicanos traductâ.

Bella canant alii nullos habitura triumphos,
Et male conversos cognata in viscera
cives,

Victoresq; sui populos, dum vincitur Hostis
Qui consanguineum genus est; aliiq; theatris
Spe lucri, aut auræ nimio popularis amore
Perpetuò infudent, quibus & sua carmina
vendant;

Furtivos parrent alii, sua crimina, Amores,
Et quæ Bella gerunt, Veperis dum castra se-
quuntur.

Nobilius moliris opus, dum sacra profanis
Posthabitis modò bella canis, seu fundere
versus,

Seu vitam verâ pro Religione paratus.

Nobiliora canis, dum Religionis avitæ
Impulsus studio, facili sacra dogmata venâ,
Et rerum à primâ deducis origine causas.

Maacte igitur virtute novâ; mysteria tantùm
Voce quidem, at strictâ, stricto velut ense
tuêris.

Exemplar superavit opus, mihi crede, nec undæ
Purius ex ipso jam semper fonte bibentur.

Pegasidas quisquis duxit te primus ad undas
Non leviter tinxit, sed pleno flumine merfit;
Nam modo vitales *Grotius* si duceret auras,
Non aliam ambiret vatem; tam divite fundis

Quæ

Ad Virum Ornatissimum, &c.

Quæ non sola fides docuit mysteria venâ :
Seu canis esse Deum, seu pressius occinis unum
Esse Deum tantum, seu quæ miracula Christus
Edidit, enumeras, seu Christi dogmata veris
Annumeranda canis, seu fortè objecta repellis :
Nec tantum *Grotium* tibi debeat Anglica
Tellus ;

Munus & illa tuum magni præfaga Maronis
Pars fuerit, (a) rursus mundo Saturnia Regna
Quæ spondet, sobolemque novam, Cœlestibus
ortam

Oris progeniem, *magnum Jovis Incrementum*.
Nec tantum vates, legumque peritus ubiq;
Audis ; (b) sed quæ etiam fudêre Orâcla Si-
byllæ

Linceus æquatis appendis lancibus, idem
Et *sophus*, & *vates*, & *consultissimus æqui*.

Accinebat David Abercrombii,

M. D.

To

To my Learned, and Ingenious Friend
———on his Translation of *Grotius de
veritate Religionis Christiana*, into Eng-
lish Verse.

What pains of old did Great Lucretius
take

To shew such Gods, as did Mankind forsake?
Unthinking, useles Beings, free from pain,
Did lazily in endless Pleasures reign.

A State so base, no Gen'rous Heroe wou'd
After his death, vouchsafe to be a God.

But you on happier Theams your Thoughts
employ,

Which those fantastick Notions quite destroy;
In charming Numbers mystick Truths rehearse,
And prove a Powerful, Active God, in Verse.

You shew him Great, Just, Merciful, and Good,
By whom all things are made, all understood.

The Night is Day to him, his piercing Ray,
Do's all the Secrets of our Souls display;

Our Thoughts, e're they proceed to action,
He knows, and all our Actions when they'r don.

No Grove, no Cave, no Cloud is so obscure,
Can from our God a guilty Head secure.

The Heav'nly Vengeance does like Lightning
pierce

The dark Recesses of the Universe :

Tet

To my Learned and Ingenious Friend, &c.
*Yet takes of humane Race propitious care,
Sees, and knows ev'ry thing, is ev'ry where.*

*The Noble Building Learned Grotius rais'd,
By you adorn'd, is doubly to be prais'd.
You to his Arguments, and weighty sense,
Have added Beauty, and Magnificence.
So to an Ancient Church, plain built, and low;
Wren gives an higher Roof, and Cupola :
Long rows of Pillars the whole Frame support,
And that which was God's House, becomes his
Court.*

*Hail great Apostle of the Muses, hail !
May your Example a're their Sons prevail,
To change Parnassus for your Sion Hill,
And all their Minds with divine Raptures fill.
Ill Plays, false Satyr, empty Songs no more,
Henceforth prophane our hallow'd British shore;
Before your Ark may their lewd Dragons fall,
And you without Dragoons convert them all.*

J. E.

To

To his worthy Friend——on his Version
of *Hugo Grotius*, of the Truth of Chri-
stian Religion, into English Verse.

TIs not, Dear Sir, the least ambitious aim
Of being noted for Poetick Flame,
Or with exalted your's to mix my Name;
That now invites my Muse to celebrate
Those praises, you have justly got of late:
But as a Tribute to our Friendship due,
That I this slender Off'ring make to you.
As Noah, with a pious firmness, stood
Against th' Assaults of the invading Flood,
Until those happy days the welcome Dove
The Olive brought, by Orders from Above;
So you in stormy Weather have I seen,
Easy in Thought, and of a Mind serene,
Until those Clouds Jehovah did disperse;
And led your settled Thoughts to sacred Verse:
And surely from Above you took that Fire,
For none below such thoughts could e're inspire.
For, David-like, your charming Lyre you
string,
In praise and honour of th' Eternal King,
But first of all, as a wise Architect,
Who, that he may unshaken Piles erect,

Sees

To his worthy Friend, &c.

Sees his Foundations solid are and sure,
The only means his Buildings to secure;
So while Religion does your Numbers fill,
And sweetly flows from your judicious Quill,
Your Corner-stone, and Principles you take
From him, who did those equal Precepts make.
And first 'gainst Ath'ists you his Being prove,
And all their shallow Arguments remove.
With strongest Reasons then you plainly show,
That all his Attributes from's Essence flow;
And this in Verse, and terms so well exprest,
As if He taught from your inspired Breast.
Then by your Verse, you liberty have giv'n
To Providence, which some confin'd to Heav'n;
As did Lucretius, who had fondly taught,
The lazy Gods of earthly things ne're thought.
In better colours you the Godhead show,
And fully prove, to Providence we ow
The change & turns of all things here below. }
Then next Religion, you in all its parts
Have surely fortifi'd, by the best Arts
Of Verse and Reason, and to th'World evince,
That Piety ne're stranger was to sense.
Here may the empty noisy Town-Gallant,
Who knows no Language but the modish Cant,
Whose tedious minutes stick upon his hands,
And make him curse the slow and lingring
Sands;
By your Example learn his time t'employ
On things, that yield a solid lasting joy.
Thus

To his worthy Friend, &c.

*Thus taught by you, he speedily will find,
No Pleasures equal those' oth' pious Mind:
But tho' in well-chose Numbers you excel,
And true Philosophy your Verse does swell;
Yet no confinement knows your active Soul,
But rifles other Arts without controul.
You into the abstrusest Notions dive,
And loaded with the sweets return from
th' Hive.*

*Nor does the knotty Law, which few untwist,
Your piercing Judgment's conqu'ring force resist;
And tho' to some it takes Gigantick Form,
Yet you its Frowns and Menaces do scorn;
And being o'recome at your expence and toil,
The weaker Heads may bear away the Spoil.
Thus joining Law to Piety, you prove,
The Law not more of Serpent hath than Dove.*

A. M.

To

To his Friend the Author.

Poet and Preacher, heretofore the same,
In dull or lazy times distinct became;
In pleasing Numbers British Bards of old
To th' lifting Croud Religion did unfold:
In Verse they chose their Raptures to express,
In Verse their sacred Mysteries to dress;
Religious Ardours thus they did inspire,
And kindle with a pure Poetick Fire.
Primitive Muscs modest Virgins were,
Ne're sung what might offend the chaste Ear;
In lovely Dress each Vertue did adorn,
In ugly Shapes each Vice expos'd to scorn.
But now turn'd Prostitutes, upon the Stage,
They teach not Manners, but corrupt the Age;
Their easy Province in our Time has been,
To raise our Lust, or gratify our Spleen,
Maliciously to murder a Good Name,
And amongst others, Verse it self defame.
If with more Chastity, and less of Spite,
Some modern Poets set themselves to write,
It is with fulsome Praise to court a Friend,
And basely flatter for some baser End;
Grossly they lay the thickest Varnish on,
Where Nature made the worst Complexion;
And thus the dignity of Verse is stain'd,
Apollo's sacred Temple thus profan'd.
But this our Author in a pious strain
The Poet and Divine writes again;
His Muse at once doth both instruct, and please,
She gilds the Pill which cures the Mind's Disease,
So weak's our Appetite to what is good,
So weary grown of plain-drest wholesome Food,
That

To his worthy Friend the Author.

*That Wit and Verse must spice it for our taste;
Or else our squeamish Stomacks choose to fast.
Tho Truth more naked may in Prose appear;
She's more alluring thus, and not less clear.*

*Happy Maintainer of our Faith in Verse,
Proceed Lucreti' an Atomes to disperse;
Proceed Eternal Truths thus to reherse;
Such Truths for all that Fiction may atone,
Poets did e're invent to please their own,
And make succeeding [Times] for real swal-
low down:*

*Such Truths enlightned Minds on Earth improve,
And propagate immortal Songs above.
Henceforth more sacred shall the Muses be,
And more ador'd the Art of Poesy,
Happy Assistant of Divinity.*

E. Ll.

E R R A T A.

The Reader is desired to amend with his Pen these following Errors in the Print; and tho the frequent false pointings may change the sense in many places; 'tis hoped a little regard to the connection, or manner of the Expressions, may rectify them.

Page 7. line 12. for *maintain*, read *obtain*. P. 15. l. 1. f. *Catallus*, r. *Carullus*. P. 23. l. 13. f. *Reins*, r. *Veins*. P. 56. l. 12. f. *sty'd*, r. *styl'd*. P. 75. l. 7. f. *Sou'raig*, r. *Sou'raign*. P. 79. l. 5. f. *compare*, r. *compares*. P. 83. l. 28. f. *conque'sts*, r. *conquests*. P. 98. l. 8. f. *di*, r. *do*. ib. l. 14. r. *Holocausts*. ib. l. 24. f. *pleas'd*, r. *pleas*. P. 99. l. 25. f. *whem*, r. *whom*. P. 105. in Marg. f. *at*, an. P. 106. l. 4. f. *should*, r. *would*. P. 117. l. 6. f. *disfawde*, r. *disfawdt*. P. 120. l. 12. f. *stronger*, r. *stronger*. P. 122. f. 10, r. f. P. 145. l. 2. f. *Depostory*, r. *Repository*. P. 162. l. 17. f. *Eclagues*, r. *Expressions*.

GROTIUS



GROTIUS *his Arguments for the
Truth of Christian Religion, ren-
dred into plain English Verse.*

THings visible declare a God unseen :
Some things 'tis obvious did in time ^{I.} *That there is a*
begin : *God.*
And these could never their own
Beings cause ;

Nothing we're sure could act before it was,
It's rise from something else it then must draw,
Which holds as well in what we never saw ;
From which things subject to our Senses came, }
Till that we find which always was the same, }
And this is God, whatever be the Name :
A Being necessary to exist ;
For else the World must have beginning mist.
This also the consent of Nations proves,
Where e're Barbarity Reason removes.
What only from Opinion rose, we see
Men often change, nor in the same agree :
This Notion always, in all places found,
Did even *Aristotle's* Doubts confound.
Some cause is needful then to be assign'd,
Which may extend alike to all Mankind ;
And this God's Revelation must be thought, }
Or, a Tradition from first Parents taught : }
If it's the first, you grant the thing is sought : }

B

But

Of the Truth of

But if the last ; in what's of so much weight,
 Why should first Parents propagate a Cheat ?
 If where'soe'er Humanity is known,
 They the Idea of a Godhead own ;
 In places late found out, and long ago,
 Not only with the dull, but witty too ;
 These would unmask it, if it were design,
 Nor could the others lay a Plot so fine.
 If some in sev'ral Ages have appear'd,
 Who seem'd as if no Godhead they rever'd, }
 'Tis an Objection nothing to be fear'd :
 For few they've been, their Arguments but vain,
 Such as a Profelyte could rarely gain :
 'Twas not from Reason common to Mankind,
 But some Disease, or Folly, of the Mind,
 An affectation something new to show,
 Like him that Blackness would ascribe to Snow :
 Or, no right Judgment could by such be past,
 Be'ng like the Sick, whose Mouths are out of taste.
 And this the rather is to be believ'd ;
 Because from all th' Accounts we have receiv'd,
 We find the best of Men were always those,
 Who with the notion of a God did close.
 That a dissent from what so long obtain'd,
 Only with Minds deprav'd its credit gain'd,
 Whose vicious Int'rests cann't a Godhead bear,
 To pass right Judgment on their Actions here,
 Ev'n hence is seen ; that whatsoe'er they say,
 Whether succession in an endless chain,
 Or the wild Atoms undirected dance,
 Or whatsoever Scheme they please t' advance ;
 The Difficulties all recur, or more,
 Than lay against what was receiv'd before.
 Some seem to disbelieve a Deitie,
 Because they cann't his Sacred Presence see :

But

the Christian Religion.

3

But these, if they can any thing descry,
Must ev'n the being of their Souls deny,
Which ne're were subject yet to mortal eye:
Nor ought 'gainst this *Idea* more to strive,
Because their shallow reasonings can't arrive
To understand the Nature which they find;
For it belongs to the inferior kind,
Not fully to conceive of what's above:
Beasts, of Man's nature, can't fit Judges prove;
Less, how the *few* first gave the *many* Law,
And by what methods kept the *Rout* in awe;
How Men could trace the flights o'th' starry host,
And round the dang'rous Deep in safety coast.
These things above their reach must be confess'd;
And Man, as he excels the down-lookt Beast,
Should think that he who made him to excel,
Does in a distance far above him dwell;
And that there is an Excellence unknown,
Because it is superiour to his own.

Having thus found a Deity above,
Let's try how we his Attributes can prove:
One Proof concerning them in this does lie,
That what he is, is by necessity,
And this clearly infers the Unity;
For if we this extend to more than one,
We unto numbers infinite must run.
What does exist by necessary Law,
That Force must into actual being draw,
And this to single things must be apply'd;
But when we speak of gen'als, 'tis deny'd.
Multiplications too of things we know,
From a fecundity of Causes flow;
And as the numbers of the Causes were,
So are th'effects more numerous, or rare;

II.
*That there is but
one God.*

B 2

But

Of the Truth of

But nothing caus'd the Deity to be.
 In diffe'rent things we differences see ;
 Th' Essence, not Difference, is needful here ;
 Nor does one sign of many Gods appear :
 The Universe, a single World is found,
 One radiant Sun enlightens all around.
 In ev'ry Man only one living Soul
 Is all in ev'ry part, and in the whole.
 Were there, besides, more than one Deity,
 In Pow'r and Will all absolutely free,
 How if th' Almighty Powers should disagree ?
 Should one be opposite to th' others Will,
 Each could not then its purposes fulfil ;
 But this is far below a Pow'r Divine.

III.
*That all Per-
 fection is in God.*

Next, full Perfection in this God does shine ;
 Which cannot but from hence be understood
 That whatsoe're in things we find of good,
 Or a beginning had, or else had none ;
 What ne're began belongs to God alone :
 That which began, being from something drew,
 And since from nothing, nothing ever grew ;
 It follows, what Perfections e're are seen
 In the Effects, have in the Causes been ;
 And all must be from the first Cause deriv'd,
 Which of Perfection ne're can be depriv'd.
 What always was can no dependance bear,
 Nor can an outward Cause its force impair :
 Ne're from its self a diminution came ;
 For all things at their own Perfection aim.

IV.
*That God's Per-
 fection is infi-
 nite.*

To these Perfections of the Deity,
 We cannot but ascribe Infinity ;
 For all the limits we in things explore,
 Are that no Cause communicated more,
 Or else the Subject could not hold the store ;

But

the Christian Religion.

5

But God could nothing take from any cause ;
Since, as we've shew'd, he necessarily was,

What acts more perfect is, than that which
can't,
And things endu'd with Life than those which
want ;
What understands, than that which nothing knows,
And what is good, than what does that oppose.
These then we attribute to the most High,
Nor can the manner infinite deny,
His Life, his Pow'r, his Knowledg, without end,
Nor does his Goodness one exception blend.
On what's already said it does depend,

V.
That God is eternal, omnipotent, omniscient, and absolutely good.

That all things owe their rise to him alone,
Who is, being of necessity, but one.
What e're else in the Universe has room,
From something divers from it self did come ;
Either immediately, or in its cause,
From the Divinity beginning draws :
And this not Reason only, Sense, may shew,
If we the Structure of our Bodies view.
Th'inward and outward parts for use conspire,
Without the Parents pains, or known desire,
And with an Art none can enough admire.
This shews the Excellence o'th' Sov'raign Mind,
Which made this all. Much we in *Galen* find
Our Admiration to confirm, or raise,
Where th'uses of the Hand and Eye he weighs :
This is declar'd ev'n by the Creatures mute,
Whose ev'ry part some certain use does suit,
And takes a Figure proper to its end,
To which the force of matter could not tend.
Of this Inanimates strong proof may yeild,
The Plants, and painted Glories of the Field.

VI.
That God is the cause of all things.

Of the Truth of

Into the proof this the Waters flow,
 And tho the Earth by nature lie below,
 These in the middle between that, and Air;
 To see the course inverted is not rare,
 And Waters often intersperst with Earth,
 To give things Nourishment, or easy Birth.
 To have a certain aim in acting, shews
 A Nature understanding what to chuse:
 But things not only serve their proper end,
 But do the good o'th' Universe intend,
 Thus against Nature Water does ascend,
 Lest somewhere a Vacuity prevail,
 And the great Building wanting Juncture, fail:
 But such a force could never move the whole,
 Unless from him who did this Mass controul.
 Actions so regular in Beasts appear,
 As that they from some Reason mov'd, declare;
 For this observe the lab'ring Bee, or Ant,
 Nor yet in others do w'Examples want,
 Who without any previous trial, use
 Things hurtful to avoid, helpful to chuse:
 That from no judgment of their own it came
 Appears, in that they always act the same,
 Nor can they other things, tho less, effect;
 Wherefore some foreign Reason did direct,
 Or else imprint their Natures with this force;
 And we to God for this must have recourse.
 The Lights above, chiefly the Sun and Moon,
 Shine forth for this as clear as is the Noon,
 Their Courses order'd, and attemper'd so,
 That sublunary things may thrive and grow:
 The ready motion through the Æquator were,
 But they go slenting to refresh us here,
 And that each Realm the benefits may share.
 As th'Earth the living Creatures does preserve,
 They, where much stronger, humane uses serve;
 Which

the Christian Religion.

7

Which made even the rigid Stoicks write,
That th^e Universe was made for Man's delight :
But since no Pow'r of Man could e're attain,
Over the bright Celestial Host to reign,
Nor could they put themselves under his sway ;
'Tis then as some Superiour they obey ;
And this must needs be that eternal Mind,
Which the vast Fabrick of the World design'd, }
And the Contextures wonderfully joyn'd :
The Stars eccentric Motions this proclaim,
Which not from matters force, but a free Agent
came :

This the Positions they above maintain,
And the unequal form of Land, and main :
That this way, more than that, the Stars encline,
As in th'appointed places of the Heav'ns they shine.
The Earth in the most perfect form is found,
Which all Men must confess to be the round.
Some of its parts ev'n in Heav'ns bosom laid,
Declare the Pow'r which that Extrusion made.
Is there a Sot who can to chance ascribe,
What is more acc'rate than we can describe ?
As if a casual Coalition cou'd
Make a fair Edifice of Stone and Wood,
Or Letters with an accidental cast,
Should make a Poem through all Ages like to last,
Who Geometrick Figures saw on shore,
Did thence the footsteps of a Man explore,
Knowing that Chance could ne're such things
compose. }

That Man began in time this also shows,
That by degrees Arts to improvement rose,
That sev'ral still successive Ages find
Places before unpeopled with Mankind,
And they their Language from some Neighbours
Or them who the discovery did make : (take,
Some

Of the Truth of

Some gen'ral Institutions too, have been
 So common unto all the race of Men,
 That them not instinct, or collective thought,
 So much as a more plain Tradition taught;
 Such as was Sacrifice in pious Rites,
 And Shame first blushing at unchast Delights,
 The solemn tying of the Nuptial Band,
 And flying incest tho without command.

VII.
*Answer to the
 Objection con-
 cerning the cause
 of Evil.*

Nor ought we, because ill does footing gain,
 To raise a Question, whether God does reign?
 As caus'd by him that never did exist,
 He made only what truly does subsist,
 From what Subsistence has, there may proceed
 Such Accidents as is an humane Deed:
 He Man, and his sublimer Mind, did make,
 With a full pow'r to chuse what Path to take:
 This is a glorious liberty of Will,
 Good in it self, tho it produces ill:
 This which is moral ill, beyond dispute
 'Twere impious to the Godhead to impute:
 But it his Goodness does not cloud i'th'least,
 That what is ill, as on the Senses prest,
 From him should come, to punish what is past,
 Or to induce a better Life at last;
 Tho 'tis like Physick, nauseous to the taste.
 To this the health we of our Souls do owe.
 Some from two Principles think all things flow;
 The ill from one, as absolutely bad,
 As that was good, whence th'other being had:
 But should such contrariety be found,
 How could the course of things keep on their
 round?

VIII.
*Against two
 Principles, or
 Causes of things.*

One would the other's Workmanship destroy,
 And neither it's Creation could enjoy.

the Christian Religion.

9

Ill absolute could never self-exist,
For 'tis defect in what has something mist ;
But then it's subject's to some good arriv'd,
In that of being it is not depriv'd.

That all things here below directed are
By the Almighty's Providential Care
From hence is seen, that not only Mankind,
Happy to have an understanding Mind,
But Birds and Beasts, with something in it's stead,
Tenderly cherish what themselves have bred :
That this partakes of Goodness, need we prove ?
And who can from the Godhead this remove ?
The rather, since no limits can be found,
Which may t'his Knowledg, or his Pow'r, give
bound.

What e're is done, or to be done, he knows ;
And what can hinder when he'll interpose ?
What was before observ'd * how things forsake * *Sect. 6.*
The Tendencies they of themselves would take,
That they may serve the common end of all,
Under this Head as properly may fall.

That the Celestial Orbs do not confine
The Influences of Providence Divine,
What's said already fully may perswade
(For that exerts its force to all things made.)
The Courses of the Stars besides appear,
To be appointed for our Service here ;
But that, for which another thing's ordain'd,
The more immedi'ate care must needs have gain'd.

Out of a sottish Error some contend,
That Providence don't single things intend,
But only universals ; which pretence
Would bar ev'n God of his own Providence :

Not

IX.

*That the Uni-
verse is governed
by God.*

X.

*Even sublimary
things.*

*And things sin-
gular.*

Of the Truth of

Nor can that Knowledg infinite be thought
 (As God's is prov'd in what's already brought)
 Which does not take in all things singular :
 If thus his Knowledg, what impedes his care ;
 Since we in single things, as such, may view
 Their proper end, and universal too ?
 'Tis own'd that Gen'als through his care exist,
 And they only in Singulars subsist :
 If these for want of Providence expire,
 The kinds of them we should in vain desire.

XI.

*This prov'd from
 the preservation
 of Governments.*

The special Influen'ce of a Pow'r above,
 Kingdoms and Common-wealths continued,
 prove.

A form of Government that first prevail'd,
 Has not through many Tracts of Ages fail'd :
 For this we might all Histories apply,
 Where a Republick, where a Monarchy,
 All the Contrivances and Plots of Men,
 If they unsettle, bring the same agen ;
 So that against a long fixt Pow'r to fight,
 Seems ev'n the Providence of Heaven to slight.
 Tho Human Wisdom might preserve it long,
 Yet the subjected Rabble are so strong,
 Such the Vicissitudes of human things,
 That none could fix them but the King of Kings.
 But then this Providence chiefly appears,
 When the Foundations of a State he tears ;
 This Cyrus, Alexander, Cesar too,
 Tartarian Cingi, and Namcaa shew.
 These Men in things where Prudence has a share,
 By far beyond its force successful are ;
 Nay, the uncertainty of things below,
 Unto their prosp'rous Fortunes seems to bow ;
 When like Events to the same constant end
 As 'twere by a Conspiracy do tend,

They

the Christian Religion.

II.

They argue a direction from on high :
Sometimes a lucky size turns on the Die ;
But if the same an hundred times you fling,
'Tis evident it from some Art must spring.

But Miracles afford the clearest sign
Of a presiding Providence Divine,
And the fore-knowledg of Futurity,
Of which we have such Proofs as none deny ;
Since God is infinite in Pow'r and Skill,
Can any thing withhold his Sov'rain Will,
From acting and imparting to Mankind,
What beyond Nature's course he has design'd ?
That very Course he did at first ordain.
But if inferiour Minds to this attain ;
Much more may God, who suffers what they do,
(If they do not his full intent pursue)
In Kingdoms constituted where we live,
Who made the Law, can Dispensation give.

XII.
From Miracles.

That *Miracles* have been we may believe,
If we the Story of the Jews receive ;
Whence their Religion of such date we know,
Tho all things have conspir'd its overthrow :
It long has been depriv'd of humane Aid,
And ev'ry where a Scoff and By-word made ;
Yet still continues, when all others move
(Except the Christian, which does that improve)
As soon as that Authority is gone,
Which forc'd, or laid inviting Colours on.
Thus fell the *Pagan*, *Mahomet's* does last,
Because it's Empire's date not yet is past.
If any ask me what could be the cause,
Which gave such rooting to the Jewish Laws ?

XIII.
*Specially among
the Jews, which
have additional
Credit from the
continuance of
their Religion.*

'Tis

Of the Truth of

'Tis plain, it was the Miracles were wrought,
 When God himself did lead, and for them fought,
 And which were by a clear Tradition taught,
 Which might be trac'd from Father unto Son,
 Till they reacht *Moses*, and the Son of *Nun*:
 Who else can think such stubborn Men as they,
 Would so severe a Ritual Law obey?
 Or, that a People evidently wise,
 Would chuse with so much pain to circumcise?
 Which other Nations needs must have contain'd:
 Nor could them in it self to God commend

XIV.

By the Truth
 and Antiquity
 of *Moses* his
 Story.

Moses his Sacred Writings, where we find
 These Miracles to memory consign'd;
 Not only this their lasting Credit gave,
 That the Tradition, which the *Hebrews* have,
 Speaks him to be of God chose, and inspir'd;
 But that he his own Glory ne're desir'd,
 Nor sought th'advantage of his Friends, or Blood;
 From hence is manifestly understood,
 That his own Sins he never seeks to hide;
 And the High-Priesthood to his Line deni'd,
 As well as in chief Civil Pow'r to place,
 Fixing them with the vulgar Levites Race:
 Which shews he had no cause to falsify;
 Nor did he use that Art becomes a Lie:
 No varnish to set off a studi'd Tale;
 But Truth did with its native force prevail.
 Consider further the unequall'd Age
 Of the known Writings of this Jewish Sage:
 The *Greeks*, to whom most own their Learning
 due,
 Theirs from abroad most evidently drew,
 And many Proofs 'twas from the *Hebrews* shew.
 The *Attick* Laws, & *Roman*, sprang from thence,
 From those which *Moses* taught did first com-
 mence.

And

the Christian Religion.

13

XV.
By the testimony
of the Gentiles.

And Men of other Rites full witness bear
 Unto the Ancient Truths he does declare ;
 This th' old *Phœnician* Histories do shew,
 As we in *Sanboniatho* may view.
Indians, Egyptians, many of the *Greeks*,
 Teach how the *Chaos* was to him that seeks ;
 How first the Animals , and Man at last,
 (Man in an heav'nly mould divinely cast,
 Out of the egg (for so they call't) did haste,
 That Man had giv'n him pow'r o're other things;
 This, among others, *Ovid* sweetly sings :
 And this from Grecian Poets he did take.
 That God the World into its being spake,
 The *Platonists* and *Epicarmus* thought,
 And he who long before in Verses brought
 A rich Collection of what *Orpheus* taught.
 That the bright Sun did not produce the heat,
 But as it was ordain'd its lucid seat
Empedocles confest : *Catullus* too,
 And *Aratus* did in their flights pursue
 A fixt abode above the starry Skys ;
 That there's perpetual Light *Homer* descrys.
Milesian Thales out of ancient Lore,
 That there's a God, whom nothing ever bore ;
 That th' Universe is fair, as by him made ;
 That antecedent to the Light was Shade.
 With this the *Orphics*, *Hesiod* too delights,
 And thence some Nations count the time by
 nights.
 Wife *Anaxagoras* in his search did find,
 That all things came from a superior Mind.
 Smooth *Aratus*, that God the Stars did make,
 That from his Breath all things their life did
 take
 Did *Virgil*, after Grecian Poets say,
Hesiod, that Man was form'd from out the Clay.
Homer,

Of the Truth of

Homer, Callimachus, that God is one,
 And that all things proceed from him alone.
Maximus Tyr'ius strongly holds, that this
 The uniform consent of Nations is.
 That Honour which *Latines* and *Greeks* did shew
 To the seventh Day (not here to name the Jew)
 Which in unquestion'd Authors one observes,
 The mem'ry of God's sev'n Days works preserves.
 The *Celticks* this, and this the *Indian* speaks,
 Who portion out the Seasons into Weeks,
 And this the Names which they assign'd each day:
 That Men at first liv'd in a simple way,
 Their Manners rude, they naked to the Skin
 Is ev'n in some *Egyptian* Writers seen.
 Th' *Indians*, as *Strabo* shews, did celebrate
 That Golden Age the Poets do relate:
 Wild *Indians* did i'th' History agree,
 Of *Adam*, *Eve*, the Serpent, and the Tree,
 If to *Maimonides* we Credit give:
 Nay, Witnesses who in our Age do live,
 Affirm that *Indian Pagans* keep the same;
 Their learned *Brachmans* mention *Adam's* name.
 Those at *Siam* reckon with us, the World
 About the Poles six thousand Years has twirl'd:
 That at the first Men liv'd a thousand years,
 In the *Caldean* Registers appears:
Egyptians this, with some *Phœnicians* say;
 Nor want there *Greeks* as positive as they.
 And this may the more easy credit gain,
 Because to after-ages did remain (shew
 Vast Graves, which did the mouldred Bodies,
 Compar'd with present, of a monstrous hew.
Pausanias and *Philostratus* of *Greeks*,
 And this the Roman Nat'r'list, *Pliny*, speaks,
 How God and Angels did with Man converse,
 Till he provok'd their absence for a curse,

After

the Christian Religion.

15

After the Greeks *Catallus* does relate ;
 And the old Giants truly ferine state ;
 With *Moses* Greeks and Latins do agree ;
 And in all Nations we some Proofs may see,
 Of what about the Deluge he has shown :
 All time to that old *Varro* call'd unknown.
 Those things on which the Poets Fictions ground,
 In other Writers are unblended found,
 Agreeing with the Truth in *Moses* seen :
Berosus with the *Chaldees*, *Abidene*
 Among th' *Assyrians*, did hold forth the same ;
 And the pacifick Dove the last does name :
 This Grecian *Plutarch*, *Lucian* mentions this,
 Who says, that *Syrian Hierapolis*,
 Retain'd the Story of the Ark of old,
 Which the sav'd race of Men and Beasts did hold :
 In *Damascene* and *Melo* this you'll see,
 The last does in the name of Ark agree :
Apollidorus does transmit to fame
Deucalion's Story, differing but in name :
 And sev'ral *Spaniards* do at large attest,
 That in *America* remotest West,
 The mem'ry of the Flood they plainly trace,
 And preservation of all Mortal Race :
 The Raven forc'd to keep upon the Wing,
 And well-come Dove which th'Olive-branch
 did bring,

Gen. 8. 7, 12.

Where Men inhabited before the Flood
 By *Joppe*, nam'd in *Pliny's* understood :
 And to this day Tradition does remain
 Where th' Ark did rest, the Flood b'ing in again, }
 Mount *Ararat* on the *Armenian* Plain.
 The Father of us *Europeans* here,
Japhet in *Ethnick* Authors does appear
Ion or *Javan* the learn'd Grecians own,
 And *Hammon* Arts to th' *Africans* had shown,
 Names

Of the Truth of

Names the Mosaick Writings have preserv'd :
Josepbus too, and others have observ'd,
 That many Names of Men and places shew,
 Apparent Footsteps of what there we view.
 Which of the Poets does not proof supply,
 Of the condemn'd attempt to scale the Sky ?
 Clouds of Authorities confirm that Fire,
 In which polluted *Sodom* did expire.
 We might as many Witnesses produce,
 To shew that Circumcision was in use,
 And this continues among *Abram's* Seed,
 With *Isma'elites*, and *Idumean* breed :
 The Hist'ry of the ancient Patriarchs too
 In *Philo's Sanchoniatho* we view ;
 In *Hecateus* this, and *Damascene*,
Berosus and *Demetrius* may be seen ;
Artap'nus, and *Eupol'mus* we may add :
 This he who wrote the famous *Orphics* had.
 Some part of this *Justin's* learn'd Book affords,
 Which from *Pompeius Trogus* he records ;
 Scarce one of them but tells of *Moses's* fame,
 How he was sav'd from water th'*Orphics* name,
 And that two Tables he from God receiv'd,
 And *Polemon* confirms what's here believ'd.
 Sev'ral of the *Egyptian* Writers shew
 How vainly *Pharaoh's* Hoast did *Israel's* Flock
 pursue.

And who that thinks of *Moses* can believe,
 That he should e're have ventur'd to deceive ;
 When with wise Enemies encompass round,
 Who would have noted all the faults they found,
 If former Authors what he wrote controul'd,
 Or 'twere oppos'd by a Tradition old,
 Or he of the then present times did tell,
 What Witnesses then living could refel :

Facilian

the Christian Religion.

17

Sicilian Diodore, Pliny the young,
Longinus of sublimity of Tongue,
Strabo, and *Tacitus*, of *Moses* speak,
Jannus and *Mambris*, in their Sorceries weak,
 When they his Credit to impair did seek,
 The *Talmud*, *Pliny*, *Apuleius*, name.
 Some Laws, and Ritu'als, which from *Moses* came,
 The golden *Pythagorean* Verses shew,
 And many of them you elsewhere may view.
Strabo and *Trogus* Testimonies give,
 How just, how pious, the old Jews did live:
 What we of *Joshua*, and others find,
 Early or late, to memory consign'd,
 Agreeing with the Jews, need not be join'd;
 Since he who will to *Moses* credit give,
 Whom now it were a shame to disbelieve,
 Must not deny; which here we sought to prove,
 That God in a mirac'ous way did move,
 Exceeding all the Laws which Nature knew:
 That he such Acts in after-times did shew,
 As when *Elijah*, and *Elisha* liv'd,
 Is with less hesitance to be receiv'd,
 Because the Jews were then become more known,
 Their Rites held more in detestation;
 The World then could not but have jealous Eyes,
 And stop the growth of the most spec'ious lies.
Hæcæus and *Lycophrones* do tell
 What in the swallow'ing Whale *Jonas* besel,
 Only the name for *Hercules* they change,
 To whom they us'd t'impute things great, and
 strange.
 The truth of History did *Julian* force, (morse)
 (Who ne're t'wards Jews or Christians had re-
 To own, that God did often Jews inspire,
 And burnt *Elijah's* Sacrifice with Heav'nly Fire.

C

Add

Add to this farther, that the Jewish Law
 All vain pretence to Prophecy did awe ;
 It did Obedience to their Kings perswade,
 Yet they that sacred Office fear'd t'invade :
*Esdra*s, and others wiser than the rest,
 That they were less than Prophets still confess ;
 This gift some Ages before *Jesús* ceast.
 But who on many milli'ons could impose
 With Prodigies they did to all expose,
 Such as the High-priest's Breast-plate did disclose,
 That Light and Truth which thence shone forth
 to all.

Continu'd fresh till the first Temple's fall ;
 In this such certain Faith have all the Jews,
 As that 'twas known to their Fore-fathers, Jews.

XVI.

The same is pro-
 ved by Predicti-
 ons.

To this of Miracles, we may subjoyn
 Another proof of Providence Divine,
 The knowledge of Contingencies to come,
 Which was imparted from above, to some ;
 When not one cause, or sign could then appear,
 To them their Times and Tendencies were clear,

- (a) *Jos.* 6. 26. As th'Orbity of him who should restore
 & *1 Kings* 16. *Jerico* curst by (a) *Jeshua* long before.
 34. Who should the Temple on Mount (b) *Bethel* fire,
 (b) *1 Kings* 13. More than three hundred years e're 'twas t'expire :
 2. & *2 Kings* 23. 19. *Esaiah* too (c) *Cyrus* the great does name,
 (c) *Esa.* 44. 28. And his chief Actions since made known to fame.
 & *45.* 1. *Jerusalems* from (d) *Caldean* force being freed,
 (d) *Jer.* 37. 11. *Jeremy* saw that they should yet (e) succeed,
 (e) *ib.* 8. The fate of the Assyrian Monarchy,
 (f) *Dan.* 2. *Daniel* (f) did in the womb of Time descry,
 32. & *39.* 7, 5. That first to *Medes* and *Persians* it should fall,
 & *8.* 3, 20. Then (g) *Alexander* should ingross it all.
 (g) *Dan.* 10. *Seleucus* then, and *Ptolomy* (h) part divide,
 20. & *11.* 2, 3. What mischief should from these, the (i) *Jews*, be-
 (h) *Dan.* 8. 9.
 &c.
 (i) *ib.* tide, But

the Christian Religion.

19

But chiefly from (k) *Ami'ochus* the Renown'd : (k) Dan. 8. 23.
 The truth of these when searching *Porphy* found, 24.
 To this poor subterfuge he driven was,
 That they were wrote after they came to pass.
 But we as well a warm dispute may raise,
 Who wrote the Books whence *Virgil* has his
 Praise ;

The *Romans* knew not that by surer fame,
 Than had the Jews for what bore *Daniel's* name.
 Did not oracular Predictions shew,
 What *Mexico* should feel, and rich *Pern*,
 Which the relentless *Spaniards* should subdue ? }
 To this those many Dreams we may refer,
 Which to Events full Correspondence bear,
 Events which they who dream't could ne'r foresee
 From any thing observable below : (know,
 These to ascribe unto some casual hit,
 Or nat'ral cause, can't thinking Men besit :
 Of these *Tertullian*, writing of the Soul,
 Brings many Instances beyond controul.
 Of Sp'irits assuming vehicles of Air, }
 Which Men not only did discern, but hear,
 Authors by no means credulous declare.
 Such Spectres in *America* have been,
 In *Mexico*, and *Sina*, often seen.
 And these fire-Ordeals with old *Germans*
 known, }
 As in their Histories, and Laws are known,
 Prove an Almighty Power the just does own.

If less exertions of the Power Divine,
 For *Miracles*, and *Prophecies* now shine ;
 The force of what is prov'd it can't impair ;
 Since 'tis enough, that once such things there

XVII.
*The Objections
 that Miracles
 are not now fit,*
are now answered.

wait :

C 2

If

Of the Truth of

If they have been less frequent than before,
 God in great Wisdom these his Works forbore;
 Nor is it fit to violate the Laws
 Printed on Nature, but for weighty cause;
 As when the Jews in a small Corner clos'd,
 Were to maintain a Worship all expos'd;
 Or that the Truths in Christian Doctrine found,
 Were to enlighten all the World around.
 Such times are well becoming God to show
 That Nature's but his Hand-maid here below.

XVIII.
*And Wickedness
 obtains such li-
 cence.*

Some question whether Providence presides,
 Seeing how Sin flows in with mighty Tides,
 As if 'twould deluge all the World again;
 Which Providence, if any, should restrain.
 But th'answer's easy, since Man's Will is free,
 And God alone good by necessity:
 To bridle and keep in our Sins by force,
 Were to make Man no better than an Horse.
 Bate, that of freedom we are not bereft,
 No proper means are unattempted left:
 A Law is made our wild Desires to chain,
 And none for want of Knowledge can complain;
 Inward and outward Admonition's joyn'd
 And Threats and Promises to bend the Mind:
 That very Wickedness that's suffer'd here,
 Has limits set by God's o're-ruling Care;
 In vain it strives to swell beyond its bound,
 To force th'enclosures of the sacred Ground.
 His Church, hem'd in with the tempestuous deep,
 His Pow'r does from an Inundation keep:
 Civil Societies his Influence share,
 Else the mad Multitude no Laws would bear:
 And ev'n that Mischief, which does license get,
 Has some good end by his appointment set;

To

the Christian Religion.

21

To punish, or correct, those Souls that stray
 Out of the Paths of Vertue's narrow way;
 Or else a glorious Specimen to give,
 How nobly the Adult in Vertue thrive, (rive!
 'Gainst those Temptations which in Crouds ar- }
 While Pati'ence does its perfect work maintain,
 And constancy unto the last remain.
 And they, whose Punishment has been delay'd,
 For this forbearance have large int'rest pay'd;
 Thus they who disobey'd th' Almighty's Will,
 Against their own, his purposes fulfil.

If Wickedness unpunish'd long appear,
 The weak still suffer'd Violence to bear;
 In sorrow long to draw their hated Breath,
 And die at last an ignominious Death;
 As if their Innocence had no regard:
 Man is not therefore from God's Care debarr'd;
 For no Man knows how God exerts his Pow'r,
 In inward Blessings, th'ill can ne're devour:
 Besides, before was prov'd an Aid Divine;
 Wherefore we with the wise in the belief should
 joyne,

XIX.
*That the Just
 are often oppress'd.*

That since God knows our Acti'ons, and is just;
 Yet sometimes seems to authorize distrust;
 A future Judgment needs must be behind,
 Where Sinners their due Punishment may find,
 And all egregious Vertue, here unblest,
 Exalted to a state above the rest,
 May meet full Recompence for all its Pain.
 For this we must believe, that Souls remain,
 When loos'd from the Body's cumbrous }
 And this belief so general is known, (Chain;
 That we it's rise must from first Parents own. :

XX.
*This Argument
 is retort'd to
 prove that Souls
 survive the Bo-
 dies.*

XXI.
*Which is confir-
 med by Tradition.*

Of the Truth of

This *Homer* sings in Verses ever new,
 And this the *Gauls*, as well as *Grecians* knew;
 Their learned *Druids* this most fully taught,
 And this the *Brachmans* with the *Indians* thought:
Egyptian, Thracian, German Sages, all,
 Upon this Truth with one consent do fall;
 For proof we might unquestion'd Authors call:
 In *Strabo, Plutarch, and Laertius*, see
 How the *Egyptians, Indians* too, agree,
 In the expecting of the Day of Doom,
 After this Life is to its period come:
Histaspes, and the ancient *Sybills* spake,
 What Conflagrati'ons shall the World o're-take;
Ovid and *Lucan*, both this thought pursue,
 This at *Siam* the savage *Indians* knew;
 Of this *Astronomers* a Proof have found,
 In that the Sun draws nigher to the ground.
 Parts farthest off at first discov'ry prove,
 That we can no where from these Truths remove;
Canaries yield this Fruit, the Western Shoar
 Largely enriches with this Golden Oar.

XXII.
*Nothing in Reason
 seen against it.*

Nor can one Argument in Nature found,
 This old Tradition, so extensive, wound:
 For if we any thing observe to fail,
 'Tis either, that what's mightier does prevail,
 In its own Nature contrary to that,
 As Cold does through the force of Heat abate;
 Or the removing that in which it stands;
 As when a Glass is fallen from our hands,
 And into several little peices broke,
 The form is perisht which at first it took:
 Or else 'twas from deficiency in the cause;
 As Light does vanish when the Sun withdraws:

But

But none of these can of the Soul be said ;
 For nothing contrary to that was made ;
 In this does its peculiar b'eing delight,
 Things to each other the most opposite,
 At once it's intellectu'al Pow'r receives.
 This for the first : The second who believes ?
 For on what Subject can the Soul depend ?
 If we for this the Body should commend ;
 How happens it that when the Body's tyr'd,
 The Soul to farther Action still is fir'd,
 Without least lascitude from thence acquir'd ;
 An Object also that too much excels,
 All the weak forces of the Body quells ;
 And thus the feeble Organs of our sight,
 Cannot endure the Sun's prevailing Light ;
 The nobler Objects entertain the Mind,
 Its force is stronger, Pleasure more refin'd ;
 As when its Thoughts from matter it abstracts,
 And about lofty Universals acts ;
 The Body's forces cannot but embrace (place ;
 Things, which are circumscrib'd by time and
 For that's the Body's Nature, while the Mind
 To what's eternal, and immense, is joyn'd :
 Since then the Body don't its Act'ons give,
 It's Essence how can it from thence receive ?
 The Natures of the things we ne're discern,
 We can but by their Operations learn.
 Nor more to this can we ascribe the way
 Mention'd the last, as reason of decay ;
 For no efficient cause we can invent,
 Which failing, all the reasoning Pow'r is spent ;
 For this the Parents you can ne're assign ;
 For then their Deaths would cut off all their
 No other cause 'tis possible to name, (Line :
 Than th' universal, whence at first things came,

Of the Truth of

Whose Pow'r we're sure can no deficiency know;
 But that his Will's deficient, who can show?
 That 'tis the pleasure of the Deity
 Souls should in total Abolition lie?

XXIII.

*Many Reasons
 make for it.*

Nay th' Arguments o'th' other side are clear:
 That Man o're his own Actions pow'r does bear,
 And all the animal World his beck obeys;
 That he his Mind to God's own Throne can raise,
 And for his sake contemn all outward things:
 That in his Soul a grateful thirst there springs
 Of an immortal State above the Earth,
 And he diverts himself with solid Mirth,
 While a good Conscience does supply the Feast,
 With which he in each Circumstance is blest:
 This comforts him to bear the heaviest stroke;
 Nor can the anchor of his hope be broke:
 But then if he a wicked Life has led,
 What gaily Horrors all his Thoughts o're-spread!
 Death is the King of Terrors truly found,
 And the last Judgment inwardly does wound;
 Under the force of which great Tyrants groan,
 And hardly dare they trust themselves alone:
 Examples are too numerous to give,
 Of those, who under these Tormentors live.

XXIV.

*Whence it fol-
 lows that the
 end of Man
 should be Happi-
 ness after this
 Life.*

But if such be the nature of the Mind,
 That of it's failing we no cause can find:
 And God has pleas'd to give us many signs,
 That when the Body moulders, that still shines:
 What nobler end can mortal Man propound,
 Than that with Happ'iness this may be crown'd?
 Hence Plato; and the Pythagoreans taught;
 Man should to imitate his God be brought:

What

the Christian Religion.

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What that Felicity; and how attain'd;
 May in some part by humans thought be gain'd;
 But what God has discover'd in his Word;
 Must most of Truth, and Certainty afford;
 Which since the Christian Doctrine does hold
 Let us examine what belief 'tis worth. (forth,

XXV.
*Which to obtain,
 Men must search
 for the true Re-
 ligion.*

L I B. II.

THOU, blessed Jesus! who in Heav'n dost
 reign,
 Assist my Thoughts, while in an humble strain,
 The Truth, and Certainty, I represent,
 Of that Religion, for which thou wast sent!

I.
*To prove the
 Truth of Chri-
 stian Religion.*

That while *Tiber'us* did the Empire sway,
Jesus of *Naz'areth* did in *Judah* stay,
 Not Christians only constantly profess,
Jewish, and *Pagan* Authors, do no less:
Sueton'us, *Pliny*, *Tac'itus*, have his Fame,
 And numbers after them repeat the same:
 And that this *Jesus*, *Pilate* crucify'd,
 How're reproachful, Christians ne're deny'd:
 Nay this the *Jews* ne're scruple to declare,
 Tho' great, on that account, their Suff'rings are,
 Where e're dispers'd they among Christians live,
 And Proofs beyond desire the *Pagans* give;
 Who *Pilate's* Acts have down to us convey'd,
 In whose Memorials this as chief is laid.
Julian, and others, who the most oppose
 That rule of Life, which blessed *Jesus* shows,

II.
*Here is shown
 that Jesus liv'd.*

Con-

Of the Truth of

Concerning this did ne're one Question move:
 This the most disagreeing People prove;
 The Proofs so full, no History has more,
 Yet him most distant Realms as God adore.

III.
*Nevertheless was
 after his Death
 worshipp'd by
 Men of the great-
 est Wisdom.*

And this appears not in our Age alone,
 But we may trace it back unto his own:
 And when at Rome fierce Nero did preside,
 Many for that Profession bravely dy'd,
 As Tacitus, and sev'ral others tell.

IV.

And of these Worth'ppers, many did excel
 In Judgment and improvements of the Mind
 (Not here to name whom of the Jews we find)
 Such *Serg'ius* was who did in *Cyprus* rule,
 And *Dionysius*, Head of a fam'd School;
 That glorious ancient Martyr *Polycarp*,
Justin, and *Irenaeus*, Writers sharp;
 While *Athenagoras* at *Athens* bred,
 And *Origin*, whose Learning far has spread,
 With *Alexandrian Clemens* many more,
 Unto this suffering Lord like Rev'rence bore.
 What with such thinking Men as these could sway,
 Most of them bred in quite another way,
 On such an Object of their Faith to call,
 Where neither Honour could, or Gain befall?
 Were it not this, that having us'd the care,
 In things which of the chiefest moment are,
 Fit for the wise, trying the constant fame,
 Which did his supernat'ral Works proclaim;
 They found them such, beyond the least dispute,
 As did all vain Philosophy confute:
 Diseases quitting the long ravag'd Field,
 When nothing in all Nature help could yeild:
 Sight giv'n to him who ne're could use an Eye;
 That questionless miraculous supply

*Of which there
 could be no other
 cause, than that
 he wrought
 Miracles.*

the Christian Religion.

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Of thousands, with created Leaves of Bread,
Repeated, and thro' distant Regions spread;
And Life call'd back again after 'twas dead.

Not here the numerous instances to name,
Which had obtain'd such an unblemish'd Fame,
That *Celsus*, and ev'n a *Jew*, them confess,
And the learn'd *Jewish Talmudists* no less:
These they ne're scruple Prodigies to call,
And therein own them supernatural.

V.
*Which Miracles
cannot be ascri-
bed to Natural
or Diabolical
Efficacy, but
proceeded wholly
from God.*

Long fixt Diseases yielding at command
Of the least motion of the Lip, or Hand,
Argue a Pow'r which Nature must obey:
But if in this such Efficacy lay;
It no less strange appears, that of all those,
Who Christ, and his Religion, did oppose,
None should the mighty Secret yet disclose,
And hence we with just meas'ning may collect,
That of Imposture none can these suspect;
Since they were publick, and expos'd to sight
Of Men, who 'gainst Conviction us'd to fight,
And Men well conversant in ev'ry Art
That nat'ral Wit, or Study could impart.
And the like things repeated as was need,
Shew'd that these Works did not from chance
proceed.

Besides th' effects were such as long did last;
When things by accident are quickly past.
These things with due Consideration weigh'd,
'Gainst which the Jews have no Objections made,
Their Force from something more than humane
Which either a good Spirit was, or bad: (had,
The bad would never these great Truths attest,
By which their Empire here is so depress'd,
And which prohibit their beloved Feast,

Deeds,

Deeds, and Desires obscene; Experience shows,
That *Demons* all their Pomp and Worship lose,
Magick, and all their other Arts held vain;
Where e're Christ'anity does footing gain:
Porphiry owns, Christ's Advent did impair
The Forces of those Princes of the Air.

Who can think Evil Spirits so unwise,
Where there no Honour or Advantage lies,
But great Disgrace and Detriment t'ensue,
Yet the same Actions still they should pursue?

Less is it to be thought it should agree
With the known Wisdom of the Deity,
And that extensive Goodness all Men see,
To suffer Men, guilty of nothing ill,
Devoted absolutely to his Will,

Such as all grant the Prim'dive Christ'ians were,
To be trapan'd into a fatal Snare;

Men in their Lives unblam'd, and suffering pain,
That they a faultless Conscience might maintain

But if you say these Deeds must be assign'd
Unto some good, but secondary Mind;

Therein that they the Godhead pleas'd you own;
For all good Spirits look at that alone.

Not here those wondrous Works of *Christ* to
some name,

Which no less Author than a God proclaim;

As with new Life informing Breathless Clay;

And who, besides, can of th' Almighty say;

He does, or suffers Wonders without cause?

For no wise Maker of well-founded Laws,

Would without weighty Reason make them

vain:

But then who can another Reason feign,

Than what our Saviour did himself declare?

That God thereby did Testimony bear

Unto

the Christian Religion.

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to those sacred Doctrines which he taught,
those that saw them what else could be thought?
they being such as we observ'd before,
twere a scandal to the God w'adore,
d'impious to believe, he would impose
Men so perfectly resign'd as those.
is was the cause why many of the Jews,
ho *Moses* for their constant Guide did chuse,
out that time when *Jesus* here did move,
ceiv'd him as a Master from above,
th were the *Nazareus* and *Ebionites*,
alous Asserters of the *Jewish* Rites.

Christ's Miracles like Confirmation have,
on his return to Life out of the Grave:
his has not only been for Truth receiv'd,
t a chief Article to be believ'd
all who e're Christianity profess.
t it for certain needs must be confess,
I could not this matter of Faith have thought,
nless the Men, who first *Christ's* Doctrine
taught,
d full perswasion in their Hearers wrought:
t, evidently, this could ne're have been,
without asserting what themselves had seen:
one moderately wise, would e're have chose
Faith, which to such Dangers did expose,
nless they had affirm'd it's Truth, who saw
his great Foundation of the Christian Law:
it that it always was affirm'd, is shown
other Writings, fully as their own.
nd, as in Books as clearly 'tis reveal'd,
hey, to five hundred Witnesses appeal'd,
who saw our Saviour come to Life again,
it how durst any so appeal that feign?

VI.
Christ's Resur-
rection prov'd by
credible Testi-
monies.

And

Of the Truth of

And who could on such Multitudes prevail,
 To cheat the World with a fictitious Tale?
 Nay were the Twelve all who had this maintain'd
 They were enow full Credit to have gain'd;
 For no Man would for nothing be a Knave
 Honours 'tis sure thereby they could not have;
 For those were at the absolute dispose
 Of *Jews* and *Heathens*, who did them oppose:
 Nor could they have by this encreas'd their store,
 Thro' it they lost what they had gain'd before:
 Nor could one benefit of Life, invite
 To cheat the World with any cunning flight:
 Their very preaching, as full well they knew,
 To Labours, Hunger, Thirst, and Prisons drew:
 Then Fame with their own Sect could nevv
 tempt

Plain Men, from all degrees of Pride exempt,
 So many Inconveniences to bear,
 For the thin diet of that popular Air;
 Nor could they hope that Doctrine would succeed,
 With Nature, still intent upon it's need,
 When all Authority on Earth oppos'd;
 But as they with God's sacred Promise clos'd.
 This may be added; that whatever Fame
 They might propound, by preaching up *Christ's*
 Name,

They had no expectation it could last, (cast,
 For, so with Clouds God's Purpose was o're-
 They thought the World did to it's Period hasten,
 Which is in theirs, and other Writings plain.
 The sole Objection which can yet remain,
 Is that they ly'd for their Religion's sake:
 Which no Man, that had duly weigh'd, would
 make;

the Christian Religion.

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either their Religion true they thought,
 what they knew to be a Falshood, taught:
 had they not believ'd it to be best,
 y would not have forsaken all the rest,
 on which Safety lay and Honour too,
 had profess it, barely as 'twas true,
 els they that Profession needful knew:
 nothing else could free them from the Guilt,
 all the Blood through that Profess'ion spilt:
 if they that believ'd, not true alone,
 best, and necess'ry for them to own,
 or the Founders Death to be receiv'd;
 s could not have obtain'd, had he deceiv'd,
 laring his own rising from the Dead:
 Men whose Understandings were not sic,
 ding their Expectations frustrate there,
 uld to that Faith still holy Rev'rence bear.
 en all Religions, chiefly *Christ's*, deny
 blemish sacred things with any Lie:
 igion therefore, such an one before,
 uld never this officious Lie procure.
 e Men besides were such, as their worst Foes
 r nothing but simplicity expose:
 r had, such, Wit enough so well to sign,
 d who would do it for the sake of pain?
 ick that Profession certainly would gain:
 utmost Tortures Malice could invent,
 ny for this out of the World were sent:
 w much soever some might chuse to bear,
 r an Opinion which they valu'd dear;
 ho can imagine Men with Sense indu'd,
 t one alone, but a great multitude,
 ould make themselves subject to certain Woe,
 r what themselves had known to be untrue?

Bu

But their Lives, and Writings which they left
 Shew that they were not of their Wits bereft.
 What may confirm the Evidence of those,
 Who the first Witnesses for *Christ* arose,
 Serves for *St. Paul* as much, who did declare,
 That rapt above the Regions of the Air,
 Whether with strengthened Rays of mortal sight,
 Or merely by an intellectual Light,
 The Soul being separate from the Body's Chain,
 He saw where *Christ* does with his Father reign.
 All that the Jews could teach, he had acquir'd,
 Nor greater honour need to have desir'd,
 Than what he might expect in his old way :
 When on the other side, for this, he lay
 Expos'd to th' utmost hatred of his Friends,
 Nature depriv'd of all its darling ends,
 Travels, and Labours all his worldly Meed,
 And a reproachful death was to succeed.

VII.

Answer to the
 Objection, that
Christ's Resur-
rection seems im-
possible.

Who can assent to proofs, so clear delay,
 Unless that 'tis impossible he say,
 That is a contradiction does imply ?
 Which yet of this may with good grounds deny.
 At the same time to be alive, and dead,
 Were contradictious : but when life is fled,
 Back by the Pow'r that gave it to be brought,
 Can never sure impossible be thought :
 As *Plato* writes, to *Er*is this befall :
Heracles this does of a Woman tell :
 Of one *Herodotus* does this relate :
 And this, says *Plutarch*, was another's fate :
 Which shews that Wise-men thought that it
 might be ;
 If, that 'twas possible, we then agree,
 For *Christ* to breath again with living breath,
 After its be'ng extinguish'd once in death ;

And

the Christian Religion.

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And that 'twas so in fact so fully prov'd,
That it the Jewish Rabbi *Becai* mov'd :
But as his Followers, and others, shew,
He held forth to the World a Doctrine new ;
This must by needful Consequence be true,
Since he maintain'd 'twas by divine Command ;
For with God's Justice it can no way stand,
Or Goodness either, to exalt so high
One, who in so momentous things would lie :
Had he been such an one, who would believe
That he the certain notice should receive
Both when, and how, he should from Life retire,
And have his Reins new fill'd with active Fire,
Himself declaring that all this was wrought,
For Confirmat'ion of the Truths he taught ?

That his Resurrection evinces the Truth of his Doctrine.

These Arguments do from the Fact arise.
Let's come to what within the Doctrine lies :
He who believes, that God did all things make,
And care of his own Workmanship does take ;
And thinks withal, how great is Humane Mind ;
Unto what noble purposes design'd !
To be acquir'd by freedom of the Will,
In chusing either Moral Good, or Ill,
To close with the Rewards which so invite,
Or take the Penalties in endless Night ,
Can't think all Worship should aside be laid,
Or that refuse which *Jesus* does perswade.
Not only this the Evidence of Fact,
Intrinsic Motives strongly this exact ;
For no Religion ever yet arose,
Which did so excellent Rewards propose,
Or such a perfect Rule of Life did lay,
Or went on in so wonderful a way.

VII.

That the Christian Religion excels all others.

D

Here

IX.
For the Excel-
lency of the Re-
ward proposi-
ted.

Here to begin with the Reward, the end,
Which in their Act'ions Men do first intend,
Tho in the execution last 'tis seen:
Those Institut'ions *Moses* did bring in,
If we the Letter of the Law regard,
Beyond this Life did promise no Reward;
Rich Soil, a plentiful increase of Store,
Conquest o're all that Arms against them bore,
A vigorous old Age, and prospect clear
Of Issue long the taintless Name to bear,
Were all that did, without thick Clouds appear,
From which the Wise alone themselves had
wrought,

Through a long chain of recollective thoughts.
Hence *Moses* tho the Sadduces receiv'd,
They nothing of a future state believ'd:
The wisest Grecians, who their Learning drew
From all *Caldeans*, or *Egyptians*, knew,
Conceiv'd some hopes of Life when this were out;
Yet still 'twas mingled with o're-shad'wing doubt.
In the *Socrarick* Writings thus 'tis found;
Nor do the Latins less with doubts abound:
Of *Tully* this, and *Seneca* may be said;
When to the Truth their Arguments have led,
They seem'd afraid with their own thoughts to
close,

Which on so fallible a ground arose,
That 'twould with Beasts as well as Men agree,
The consequence of which when some did see,
A Transmigration they of Souls did feign,
From Men to Beasts, from Beasts to Men again:
Nothing like Proof did e're this recommend;
Yet it be'ng evident Man has some end;
Some thought that Vertue was its own reward,
In Instances most perilous and hard;

That

the Christian Religion.

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That that alone gives pleasure to the full,
The Wife be'ing happy in the burning Bull:
But most Men saw thro' this so thin pretence,
A form of words against apparent sense ;
As if the height of happiness could lye,
In dangers, Nature robb'd of all supply,
Faintings, and dissolutions at the last,
After a life in wasting torments past.
Others, who saw the vanity of this,
In gratifying Sense plac'd all their bliss :
But this the nature of Mankind deprest,
And humbled Man to the degree of Beast,
Extinguishing those gen'rous inbred Seeds,
Which carry him erect to noble Deeds.
In such incertainties Men groapt about,
Till Christ in Charity remov'd the doubt ;
The perfect knowledge of Man's end he taught,
Life without death, or pain, and happy beyond
thought ;

And this not only for that part of Man,
For which some Ages a Conjecture ran,
If not Tradit'ion, that it should remain,
After the be'ng unloos'ned from its Chain ;
But that God would our Bodies spiritu'alize,
That they may to a joynt Communion rise ;
And this with mighty Equity, since they,
As they the Sancti'ons of God's Laws obey,
Are often forc'd to bear with dol'rous Pain,
And Death at last, for all their Labour gain ;
Wherefore some Compensation should remain :
Nor are the promis'd Joys so grossly low,
As were the chiefest some dull Jews did know,
Perpetu'al Feasts, or that the more refin'd,
Restless Society with Woman-kind,
That powerful Lure sly Mahomet design'd :

D 2

These

Of the Truth of

These are peculiar to a Mortal State,
 To cherish Life, or else to propagate.
 Vigour in Bodies never to abate,
 Beauty beyond what in the Stars does shine,
 Knowledge of God, and Providence Divine,
 A mind with steady light, without one cloud
 Of baleful Error, or reserve to shroud,
 Perfect tranquillity of settled wills,
 While God himself the Soul with Raptures fills,
 Th' extatick Soul wholly imployd in Praise,
 And admiration which no time decays;
 This is the happiness, which Christ declares,
 Which he much undervalues that compares.

X.
*Answer to the ob-
 jection, That Bo-
 dies once dissol-
 ved, cannot be re-
 stored.*

Some urge a difficulty yet unsolv'd,
 How Bodies should, after their being dissolv'd,
 Have all their scatt' red Particles agen,
 And make the self-same individual Men.
 But by their search Philosophers can tell,
 That what ere changes have in things besel,
 The matter of them still continues fit
 Of sev'ral different *Species* to admit.
 How far soever they may be disjoint,
 Th' Almighty can their Receptacles find,
 And into the same mass together bind.
 Things of like kind the Chymists can unite,
 Of him who made the World shall we deny't?
 If into Nature's common works we look,
 We find where things have diff'rent *species* took,
 To the first form they oft again return;
 As we by sev'ral sorts of Seeds discern.
 Nor yet a Knot more difficult t' untie,
 In human Bodies eat by Beasts does lie,
 And they again for Men becoming food,
 This may concerning them be understood;

Of

Of what we eat 'tis but a little part,
 Which Nature to our Substance does convert,
 Most, Excrement, or such accession, proves,
 As Phlegm, or Choler, which with ease removes;
 Diseases, inward Heat, and outward Air,
 Much, ev'n of that which nourishes, impair:
 Which being so; what should our God impede,
 Who of mute Creatures still preserves the breed,
 Of human Bodies so much care to take,
 That what of theirs does food for others make,
 No more of added substance should produce,
 Than Poison, or the Med'cines which we use?
 And this the rather, since we plainly see,
 Man's Flesh by Nature don't for Food agree,
 But yet for once, let us admit it were,
 And part of th'last must to the first repair,
 To constitute the Man which was before;
 Yet this Objection does not press the more;
 For the same Person it may well be thought,
 Tho back to th'first some Particles are brought;
 No less Mutati'ons ev'n in Life are wrought.
 In Worms we may discover little Flies,
 In Plants, and Wine, a secret Virtue lies,
 Which the same substance after waste supplies.
 Of the like kind we might name many more,
 And shall we think the God whom we adore,
 Can't make a Body, tho dissolv'd, the same?
 Men we are are sure, for Learning great in Fame,
 Not only this as possible receiv'd;
 But that 'twould be in future times believ'd.
 This did *Caldean Zoroaster* own,
 And scarce one *Stoick* was against it known:
 Peripatetick *Theopompus* too,
 In his Researches did this thought pursue.

XI. The second Proof, that Christ's Religion's best;
The singular Sanctity of the Rules concerning God's Worship. Is in the holy Rules it gives, exprest :
 All others that have been, or can be fram'd,
 Compar'd with this, deserve to be disclaim'd,
 Both for the Worship of the Deity,
 And every Office which in Life does lie.
 The Cruelty of the old *Pagan* Rites,
 Is fully seen, in what their *Porph'ry* writes :
 And where e're late discov'ries any find,
 They'ppear to be unworthy of Mankind.
 In almost ev'ry place a Notion ran,
 That God's were pacify'd by Blood of Man,
 Nor *Grecian* Learning, nor the *Roman* Law,
 Did it's Authority from this withdraw :
 The bloody *Bacchanali'ans* this may prove,
 And the warm Sacrifice to *Lati'al Jove*,
 Their Cere'al Mysteries, most sacred held,
 With all sorts of Obscenities were fill'd ;
 As was most visible to ev'ry sight,
 When their *Arcana* were expos'd to Light :
Clement of Alexandria this does blame,
 With other Authors of undoubted Fame :
 Grave *Cato* was asham'd of those lew'd Plays,
 With which they kept their Consecrated Days.
 But the Religion of the Jews, indeed,
 Allow'd no wicked or dishonest Deed ;
 Yet loads of Ceremonies it enjoyn'd,
 That People, to Idolatry inclin'd,
 By no means tending to improve the Mind ;
 Meerely their own Will-worship to restrain ;
 Hence were the Beasts in Sacrifices slair'd :
 Their painful circumcising the Foreskin :
 And counting Work on the seventh day a Sin,
 With the prohibiting some sorts of Meat :
 When cunning *Mahomet* set up his Cheat ;

This

This was a Pattern unto his design :
 A Law he added to abstain from Wine.
 But that Religion which to Christ we owe,
 Does how we should the Godhead worship, show;
 That we must offer to the purest Mind,
 What is, as much as may be, of the kind, (quires;
 And Works good in themselves: whence he re-
 Not Circumcision of the Flesh, but of Desires :
 Our Hands from ev'ry Work not to withdraw ;
 But what is contr'ary to th' justest Law :
 Not for our Sins with Blood of Beasts t'atone,
 But, if the Truth require, to yeild our own.
 To think our God himself has Debtor made,
 For what'se're to help the poor is paid :
 Not to abstain from certain kinds of Meat,
 But with fit Moderati'on any eat,
 Such as we find unto our Health is due :
 Sometimes with Fasts the Body to subdue,
 That it may be more subject to the Mind,
 To the pursuit of things sublime, enclin'd.
 But the chief Proof of our Religion's shown,
 To lie in pious Trust of God alone,
 Thro' which devoted wholly to his Will,
 We wait when he'l his purposes fulfil,
 With certain Faith, a pledg of future things,
 Whence lively Hope with solid Pleasure springs,
 With an exalted Love, sincerely true,
 Not only of our God, but Neighbour too :
 Hence we obey not out of servile fear,
 But that we him may please whom we revere,
 Looking that as his Sons he'l us regard,
 And with Paternal Blessings at the last reward.
 We're farther taught, unto our God to pray,
 Not for that Wealth, which must in time decay,

Of the Truth of

Honours, or other things, too often found
 To Men's chief Infelicity t'abound :
 In the first place God's Glory to desire,
 But of these perishing things what Nature does
 However trusting Providence Divine, (require ;
 To which we should wholly our selves resign.
 But then to think no Labour is too great,
 In following what tends to th'immortal State,
 Pardon of Sins, and God's assisting Grace,
 That thro' all hazards we may Truth embrace.
 This Worship Christ in his Religi'on taught,
 Than which none can of God be worthier thought.

XII.
*Concerning those
 Offices of Hu-
 manity which
 we owe our
 Neighbour, that
 he has injur'd
 us.*

And, suitable to this, you that will find,
 Which with relation unto Man's enjoy'd.
Mahomet's way, brought forth, and spread by
 Breaths nothing else but terrible Alarms: (Arms,
 So the *Laconic*, which the Greeks commend,
 And th'Oracle approv'd, to this does tend ;
 Which *Aristotle* both observes, and blaims ;
 Yet War against *Barbarians* just proclaims,
 As if 'twere nat'ral ; when o'th'other side,
 By Nature we to Friendship's Laws are ty'd :
 What more unequal than when Skin for Skin
 Is pay'd, where ever civil Rule has bin ; (in,
 When Slaughter takes whole bleeding Nations }
 Such Acts as glorious Men are proud to own,
 And hence their Heads triumphant Lawrels crown.
 War, oft unjust, procur'd the mighty Name
 To *Rome*, that City flatter'd so by Fame :
 What but their Glory, and unweildy Might, }
 Made them 'gainst *Cyprus*, and *Sardinia* fight ? }
 In gen'ral, as the best Historians write,
 No Nati'ons look'd on robbing as a fault,
 When from beyond their Confines Spoils were
 brought : That

the Christian Religion.

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That to revenge a Wrong a Vertue was,
 Did with the *Stagyrist*, and *Tully*, pass.
 The *Gladiators* mutilating Fights
 The *Pagans* us'd in publick, for Delights ;
 And their own Children Men did oft expose.
 That Discipline, with which the Jews do close,
 Better, and much more holy does appear ;
 Yet, even that, with many things does bear,
 Or rather grants, which give their Passions force ;
 As using 'gainst sev'n Cities no remorse,
 With which their licence, howe're not content,
 They think't of all who differ from them meant ;
 And hence they hate all Men of other ways ;
 The *Jew* now curses *Christ'ians* when he prays :
 Their Law allow'd to make Returns of Pain ;
 An Hom'cide might b'a private hand be slain,
 When to the dead th' Avenger was of kin ;
 But such return *Christ's* Law has made a Sin :
 Nor should we in our Actions imitate,
 What shewn in others we most justly hate :
 In the first place to help the good w'are taught,
 And like our God, to benefit the naught,
 God who has giv'n in common to Mankind,
 The Sun, the starry Host, Air, Shours and Wind.

Nothing does more the care of Laws besit,
 Than th' union which does the two Sexes knit :
 No wonder that the Pagans this did slight ;
 Since of th' Adulteries, and Rapes they Write,
 In which the Gods they worship'd did delight :
 Nay by th' example of the Gods they prove,
 That Male with Male may do the Act of Love :
 For this cause with the Gods have been enroll'd
Antinous latest, *Ganymed* of old.

XIII.
Of the Conjun-
ction of Men
and Women.

This

Of the Truth of

This with *Mahometans* is usu'al known ;
Sineses, others too, for lawful own.
Grec'ian Philosophers much Art do use,
 Under an honest name that Vice t'excuse,
 And these whole Cities render'd common stew,
 While they Community of Women prais'd ;
 When yet indulgent Nature seems t'have rais'd
 A conjugal Affection, ev'n with Brutes :
 How much more equal is't, t'avoid Disputes,
 That the more holy Creature, Man, proceed,
 From an united Love, and unmixt Seed ?
 Left all Paternal Care, and Filial Love,
 But empty useles names on Earth should prove.
 The Jewish Law to check Uncleanness strives ;
 But yet too plainly yeilds one many Wives,
 And, for small causes, gives the Husband leave
 To be divorc'd from one he did receive :
 This at this day *Mahometans* maintain,
 Among the Greeks, and Latines, did so reign,
 That the *Lacon'ians* would let out their Wives,
 And this reproach, ev'n *Cato's* Fame survives.
 But by that perfect Law Christ did perswade,
 The Ax unto the very Root is laid.
 Who does a Woman's Chastity invade,
 Or but commits with a lascivious Eye,
 Can by no means the Imputation fly,
 Before the great Discerner of the Mind,
 Who, as 'twas done, judges what was design'd :
 And, since true Friendship does in Union lie,
 Body, as well as Soul, to one would tie.
 And this is much more profitable known,
 For bringing up the Children which we own.
 Few *Ethnicks* were contented with one Wife :
 The *Romans*, thus, and *Germans*, led their Life,

The

the Christian Religion.

43

Christians thus; that as the Wife's desire
in the Man, she should have his entire;
the affairs at home may well proceed;
different Mistresses would discord breed.

come to th' use of things which pass for
good;

Ethnicks Theft, as criminal, n'ere with-
stood:

XIV.
Touching the use
of all Temporal
Goods.

his *Egyptians, Spartans*, licence had;

us this, but in private men, forbid;

chiefest business of the Publick 'twas;

ch made their Orator that Sarcastm pass,

if they should to all their own restore;

'd live in Cottages, as heretofore.

not this was the Jewish Law severe;

bid with Usury to Strangers bear:

it to suit their *Geniuses* did strain,

valu'd their Religion by their Gain.

It did Injustice totally restrain;

not enquiring who the persons were:

for frail things forbid all carking care;

minds being unfit for two desires,

er of which all of the Man requires,

of them prompting him in sev'ral ways.

se cares, which Riches keep, as well as raise,

g so much servitude, and constant pain,

teals away the pleasure of the gain,

le little cost and diligence, acquires,

se few, and easie things, Nature desires;

if indulgent Heav'n affords us more,

need not throw away an useless store,

ome Philosophers have done before;

without profit it at home retain,

ay it out in things profusely vain:

But

Of the Truth of

But we are taught it nobly to apply,
 While we the wants of those that need supply,
 Giving, or lending, as those well becomes,
 Who know they are but Stewards of their Sums,
 Plac'd in their hands by God, but to dispende,
 Yet they true Treasures may obtain from thence;
 What's well laid out, God takes as to him paid,
 And makes returns which nothing can invade.
 Hence Liberality, next to divine,
 Did in the practice of first *Christ'ans* shine,
 The farthest parts of *Greece* help'd *Palestine*;
 As if the World were all one Familie.
 But in the Law we may this Caut'ion see;
 We should beware of looking for our pay
 At other hands, than his to whom we pray;
 Lest we deflow'r the Benefit we do,
 Whilst Profit, or Vain-glory we pursue:
 And lest, as 'tis too common, we pretend,
 That we should want our selves what we should
 That Age and Accidents come on so fast, (lend,
 That 'twill not for our own Occasions last;
 The Law does promise a divine Supply,
 For those who with its lib'ral Rule comply:
 And that we may the more in God confide,
 Bids us observe how well he does provide
 For th' animal, and vegetable kind:
 And we think meanly of the Sov'raign Mind,
 If we distrust his Word without a Pawn,
 As if he were a Man whose Credit's gone.

XY.
 of Swearing.

Forswearing is forbid by other Laws:
 By this, to swear at all, without just cause;
 And such Veracity it does require,
 That if 'twere kept, we need no Oaths require.

In

the Christian Religion.

45

In this Religion we shall find amass'd,
 What-e're of Excellent has ever past,
 In Sentences, or Writings of the Wise,
 Besides the Sanction added from the Skys.
 In what a moving manner does this teach
 A modesty in actions, and in speech,
 Temperance, Goodness, honest deeds, and mind,
 Prudence, with ev'ry office of Mankind ;
 What is from Magistrates, and Subjects, due, }
 From Parents, Children, Servants, Masters too, }
 And what, where Marr'age-rites make one of two: }
 Often it does the needful Rule repeat,
 Against what with such specious shews do's cheat,
 Honour and Glory, which have past for brave
 With *Greeks* and *Romans*, most reputed grave :
 But then the Summary of all does prove, }
 That we should worship him through whom }
 we move,
 And as our very selves, our Neighbours love ;
 That is, should never fail for them to act,
 What for our selves we should be sure t'exact.
 But some may urge against those Verities,
 The mighty oppositions that arise
 Among Professors of Christ's holy Name ;
 The multitudes of Sects themselves proclaim.

XVI.
Of other matters.

Yet this a ready answer may receive :
 That in all arts we may the same perceive ;
 Either thro imbecillity of mind,
 Or that to parties they're too much inclin'd :
 Yet these are limittd to certain bounds,
 Which in their controversies serve for grounds,
 On which each his own Argument would build ;
 And thus the Men in Mathematicks skill'd,

XVII.
*Answer to an
Objection taken
from the Contro-
versies among
Christians.*

Have

Of the Truth of

Have heates about the making Circles square :
 When 'tis as evident that none e're were.
 Whether if equals be from equals ta'en,
 That is not equal which does yet remain.
 In Physicks, Med'cine, other Arts beside,
 This difference, and agreement, is descryd :
 Nor does variety of opinions, known
 Among the Men who Christ's Religion own,
 Hinder at all but that they may agree,
 In what we the cheif Rules of living see,
 Those generous Principles, before exprest,
 Which recommend it's worth above the rest.
 And even this it's certainty proclaims :
 That they, whom warm dissention most inflame,
 That he commanded these never deny,
 E'vn they who will not with this Law comply.
 If any yet, to contradict delight,
 'Tis questi'oning whether the Snow be white ;
 For as the Error, here, Sense can refel,
 An vniversal concord, these can tell,
 Among all Christians that have ever wrote,
 Or from the first to last Christ's Doctrine taught,
 To which some by their deaths have Attestation
 bro'tight.
 That they did these for their Religion own,
 To equal Judges is as clearly shown,
 As 'tis that *Zenophon* did, or *Plato*, write,
 What does this Age under their names delight :
 Who wrote what we to *Socrates* ascribe,
 Or *Zeno*, Founder of the Stoick Tribe.

XVIII.

*The Excellency
 of the Christian
 Religion is far-
 ther prov'd from
 the Excellency of
 the Author.*

A third rich Magazene of Motives lies,
 For the embracing Christian Verities,
 Pth'admirable way in which 'twas taught,
 And to so far extended Regions brought ;

This

This brings us to the Author of the Rules.
The chiefest Masters of the Greci'an Schools,
Confest they nothing with assurance tell,
And fancy'd Truth lay bury'd in a Well,
Our Minds they thought were dim at things
divine,
As th'Eyes of Owls when the bright Sun does
shine.

Besides, some Vice the best of them did taint,
Some with gross flattery their Princes paint,
Some *Brothel's* lov'd, and Actions of the dark,
Others with *Cynick* Impudence would bark;
Clear Proof of their contenti'ous Tempers springs,
From quarrels about words, and trifling things.
In sacred Worship they're discover'd cold;
Since they who but one Deity did hold,
Put mighty flights on him they did adore,
Giving that very Worship unto more,
Such as they knew had no Divinitie,
Thinking from Blame the publick use would free:
Nor were they sure what meed Vertue should
have,

And this shew'd *Socrates*, when nigh his Grave.
Mahomet, Author of far spreading Rites,
As is confest by his own Profelites,
Dissolv'd in Luxury and Lust did live,
Nor left he the least earnest to believe,
That the Rewards he promis'd shall be found,
Perpetua'l Feasts and Lusts for ever crown'd;
When his own Body ne're had Life again,
And does intomb'd at *Mecha* still remain.
Moses who had the Jews divinely taught,
Tho a brave Man, yet was not free from fault;
When God would send him to th'*Egypti'an* Land,
He did too long the Embassy withstand;

And

Of the Truth of

And when God promis'd Water from the Rock,
 He thought 'twas his Credulity to mock,
 And he himself scarce any thing enjoy'd,
 Of all that has his Foll'owers Faith employ'd,
 In desert places with their Factions tir'd,
 Himself debarr'd entring the Land desir'd.
 That Christ was sinless his Disciples taught,
 Nor was one Proof against it ever brought;
 He was th'Example to the Rules he gave,
 And executed all that God would have;
 Patient of Injuries, and Torments too,
 As on the Cross he did most fully shew;
 A lover of Mankind, and ev'n of those,
 Who to that cruel Death did him expose;
 Ev'n for those Miscre'ants he to God did pray,
 Nor did he to his Foll'wers Promise pay,
 In which himself had not first led the way,
 As is not only said, but clearly prov'd.
 His Visit, after being from Life remov'd,
 How many were there that at large declar'd,
 Who him had touch'd, as well as seen, and heard?
 The Twelve were Witnesses when he did rise,
 And was receiv'd within the joyful Skies,
 Where, as appears, a Pow'r supream he gain'd,
 From which they whom he left behind obtain'd,
 Not only Tongues which they were never taught,
 But Pow'r for other things, which Nature never
 wrought;
 All which he promis'd when he left this Life,
 And which should silence ev'ry doubtful Strife;
 Whether he will, or's able to make good,
 What he has promis'd for our Spirit'ual Food.
 And hence we gather his Religion's best;
 That he perform'd himself what e're he prest,
 And was of his own Promises posselt.

the Christian Religion.

49

If then we view his Doctrine ith' effects ;
 They're such, that either God his World neglects ;
 Or we must think the Doctrine from above.
 Nothing more worthy of God's care does prove,
 Than that what's best should be the farthest spread ;
 And this of Christ's Religion may be said,
 'Tis taught thro' *Europe*, and ev'n farthest North,
 All *Asia*, with its Islands, know its worth,
Egyptians, Ethiopians, Africans,
 Are joyn'd in this with the *Americans* :
 Nor has't been only late, but long ago,
 As Hist'ries of successive Ages show,
 The Books of *Christians*, Acts of Synods too :
 Among *Barbarians* a Tradition's known,
 Of Miracles by some Apostles shown,
 The Lives and Journeys are with them express,
 Of *Thomas, Andrew*, and some of the rest,
Clement, Tertullian, and others note,
 That *Britains, Germans*, places most remote,
 Did, in their time, *Christianity* imbrace.
 What other Worship e're reach'd such a space ?
 If you say th' *Ethnick's* rival in this Fame :
 It is not one Religion, but one Name,
 Nor ever all of them worship'd the same :
 Some Stars, the Elements some did adore,
 Some Ani'mals, some what no subsistence bore,
 Nor did they the same Law, or Master own.
 The *Jews*, a scatter'd People, were but one ;
 Nor has their Law been much observ'd to spread,
 Since *Christ* his beams of Truth divine did shed.
 Many the Rules of *Mahomet* obey ;
 Yet *Christians* live among them of that way,
 And often are more numerous than they :
 When in some places where they *Christ* receive,
 Not one *Mahometan* is known to live.

*From the won-
 derful Propaga-
 tion of this Re-
 ligion.*

Considering the
weakness and
simplicity of
them who first
taught this Re-
ligion.

Men readily enough Examples take
From Kings, and others who great Figures make;
Especially if Law, and Force, they add;
Hence their increase to Ethnick, and Turkish had;
But they, who Christ's Religion first profess,
Nothing of Empire, or of Wealth, possess,
As humble in their Fortunes, as in Mind,
Foll'wing mean Trades to which they'd been
design'd :

Yet in the space of thirty Years, scarce more,
They this dispers'd, the Roman Empire o're,
And to the *Parthians* this, and *Indians* bore :
And for three Ages only private hands
Did carry on the preaching Christ's Commands,
Without external Promises, or Threats,
Nay, ev'n against th' Authority of States ;
Yet before *Constantine* in Christ believ'd,
Thro' most o' th' *Roman* World he was receiv'd,
Who with the *Grecians* preach'd up Moral rules,
For other Arts were famous in the Schools ;
Plato for th' Art of measuring the Earth,
Peripatericks how the growth, and birth,
Of Animals, and Plants, did Lectures read :
And with what subtilties Disputes proceed
The *Stoicks* in their labour'd Logicks shew,
The *Pythagorians* th' art of Numbers knew ;
Plato, and *Zenophon*, could charm the Sense,
So *Theophrastus*, with their Eloquence :
But they who first the Christi'an Doctrine taught,
By no such art upon their Hearers wrought,
Their Speech was simple, without any snare,
They only did in downright terms declare
What their great Master gave them in command,
And how the Threats and Promises did stand.

This

the Christian Religion.

51

This progress ne're had been from that alone,
But Mir'cles or God's Blessing we must own,
Or both, to carry it so strangely on.

This may be added here, concerning those
Who first with Christianity did close;
They were not in all other Rites untaught,
So with more ease to that Religion brought:
Much less were they brought up in any way,
Which might dispose them Christ for Lord to obey.
While Turks and Pagans, and the stubborn Jews,
Had something previous, helping them to chuse:

The last, their Circumcision had before,
And learnt only one Deity to adore,
Which made them ready *Moses* to receive:
While they, who in *Christ Jesus* did believe,
Had many Obstacles which would withdraw,
Custom a second Nature, humane Law,
Parents Authority, all urg'd to have kept
The way in which their grave Fore-Fathers slept,
Being *Jews* or *Heathens* bred, so to remain,
Add to all this the certainty of Pain,
Which they by that Profession were to gain,
Pain, which by Nature all Men would refuse,
Nor readily would what procures it chuse.

The Christians long debarr'd from Honours
were,

Mulcts, Confiscations, Exiles hard to bear,
Were to be counted their appointed share:
These things were light, into the Ballance cast,
With Tortures but too exquisite to last,
Cruel as witty Malice could invent;
And Life was often in the Conflict spent;
As the Histor'ians of those times have wrote,
So many Deaths, no Famine, Plague, or War,
has brought.

XIX.
*And the very
great Impedi-
ments which
might withdraw
Men from em-
bracing, or de-
tain them from
professing it.*

Of the Truth of

Nor were they with the common Deaths to strive;
 But put into consuming Flames alive,
 Or look'd for Crucifixion, and the like,
 Reading, or thoughts of which, with Horror
 strike:

Thro'out the Roman Empire these did last,
 Till their Religion *Constantine* embrac'd,
 Without them but short intervals were past:
 Elsewhere they did continue longer still:
 Yet all the blood they did so freely spill,
 The Church, but with more living seed did fill,
 And thus the more was scatterd, more did spring:
 If other Rites into the Scales we bring,
 The Greeks and other Heathens, us'd the most
 Of their admir'd Philosophers to boast,
 Bate *Socrates*, *Gymnosophists* a few,
 Scarce others dying for their way can shew,
 And who that thinks can well deny of these,
 That in their Deaths the hope of praise did please:
 They thought it glor'ous to survive in Fame,
 And have Posterity their Deaths proclaim.
 While many suff'ring for the Christi'an Name,
 Were Men in Fortunes, and Ambition low,
 That such Men were, their Neighbours scarce did
 know,

Women, and tender Virgins, gentle Youths,
 With their last Blood bore witness to these Truths:
 Who can believe of these, a vain desire,
 Or hope of lasting Fame, to this should fire?
 Besides our Martyrologies contain,
 But a small part of those who thus were slain.
 And rarely can the Jews a Martyr boast,
 Beyond *Antiochus* his time at most,
 Since Christ's Religion is for this the best,
 Is it not to be chose before the rest?

When

When the vast Multitudes we duly weigh,
Who did their Lives for this Religion pay,
Each Sex, each sort of Men, in ev'ry Age,
We needs must think some pow'rful cause
t'engage;

And what to so great constancy could move,
But Truth, and th'holy Spirit from above?
If by the Arguments already brought,
In some Conviction is not wholly wrought:
Let them consider, Proofs in sev'ral ways,
As is the nature of the thing, one weighs;
One sort does with the Mathematicks suit,
Another when in Physicks we dispute,
One when for Action we would Counsel take,
Diff'rent when Fact does th'only question make:
And this is always yielded by the Wise,
When no exception gainst the Witness lies:
And if we will not this for Proof admit,
We all the use of History must quit,
The most approved Med'cines we must loose,
That Piety too, which does its self diffuse
Where ever Parents are, and Children, known,
For want of Evidence must needs be gone.
It is the pleasure of the Pow'r most high,
The things wherein he'd have our Faith to lie,
That our Obedience it's Reward may gain,
Should not appear so evidently plain,
As things which Sense or Demonstrati'on shew;
Yet as much Light should carry, as is due
For raising a most firm belief, in those,
Who will not pertinaci'ously oppose;
Hence we the Gospel as a Touch-stone find,
To try and prove which is the upright Mind,
For since so many good, so many wise,
Embrac'd so highly [penal] Verities;

Of the Truth of

It shews that other's Incredulitie,
 Never from a defect of Proofs can be,
 But that they would not have that pass for true,
 Which their Affecti'ons did so much eschew,
 That it was hard, with a regardless Eye
 To suffer all that glitters here, to lie; (hold
 Which needs must be, if they for Truth would
 All that has been concerning *Jesum* told,
 And therefore would obey the Rules he gave;
 An Evidence for this herein we have,
 These, many Histories for true receive,
 Which they on bare Authority believe,
 Of which no Foot-steps at this day are known:
 As for the History of Christ, are shown:
 This in the Jews Confessi'ons we may trace,
 And the Assemblies which these Truths embrace,
 Of which some cause we cannot but assign;
 Nor can't be any thing below divine:
 No humane force could it so long maintain,
 And such remote and spreading Conquests gain:
 This could proceed from Miracles alone,
 But if we are resolv'd them to disown,
 That without them it should such force acquire,
 Is what we ought much rather to admire.

LIB. III.

I.
*For the Authori-
 ty of the Books
 of the New Co-
 venant.*

HE whom these Arguments, or others, move
 As true, and best, Christianity t'approve,
 Would he the knowledg of it's Precepts gain,
 Must search those sacred Scriptures which obtain

The

The name of Testament, or Cov'nant, new;
Where we the whole of this Religion view:
For this we should not scruple to receive,
What Christi'ans always hold that they believe:
To Men of ev'ry Sect we Credit pay,
As to the Books they shew us of their way:
And thus the *Muslim* is justly thought,
To shew what Doctrines *Mahomet* has taught.

Since then the Truth of Christ's Religion's
known;

And that lies in the Books the Christi'ans own;
If any a more special Proof require,
We them r'admit this equal Rule, desire,
That they who any Writing will oppose,
With which for sev'ral Ages Men did close,
Are bound those Arguments first to maintain,
Which may impeach the Credit that did gain,
Till which, of full Authority it must remain.

The Books in which no Christians disagree,
To which some certain Names affixt we see,
To have been wrote by those whose Names they
The Writers of succeeding times declare; (Bear,
Thus *Iustin*, *Irenæus*, *Clement*, shew,
With other Men of Ages that ensue,
That all the sacred Books were titled true.
Add farther, as *Tertullian* does declare,
Some of th'Orig'nals in his time were fair:
And ev'ry Christian Church the same did own,
Ev'n before Councils to unite them, known.
Nor did the *Jews*, or *Pagans*, ever doubt, (boist.
But they were theirs, whose Names they bear a-
Judius confess in terms by no means dark,
That *Peter*, *Paul*, with *Matthew*, *Luke*, and
Mark,

II.

That the Books
which have any
Authors Names
to them, were
writ by them
whose Names are
prefixt.

Were Authors of those Books which bear their Names ;

Thus he but his own want of Wit proclaims,
Who doubts of what both *Greeks* and *Romans*
thought,

T'have been by *Homer*, or grave *Virgil*, wrote :
More on that Evidence should we rely,
Which almost ev'ry Nation does supply.

III.

*The doubt re-
mov'd from
Books anciently
doubted of,*

Yet does the Volume now in use, contain
Books, which at first did not like *Cædit* gain ;
Thus 'twas with one which we *St. Peter's* call,
The same did those of *James* and *Jude* befall :
And thus with two, which the like late consent,
From *John*, the Elder sty'd, supposes sent.
Th' *Apocalyps* as doubtful has been thought,
And the *Epistle* to the *Hebrews* wrote :
Howe'r that many Churches them receiv'd,
And sacred their Authority believ'd,
Appears, in that *Christians* who first did write,
Them, as of such Authority, do cite ;
Which may in reason well be thought to shew ;
Of some, nothing at first, some Churches knew ;
Howe'r the Truth being set in a clear light,
They did with others in their use unite :
Nor was there any cause in these to cheat ;
For without them the System were compleat,
The self-same Doctrine they do but repeat.

IV.

*The Authority of
Such Books as
have no Title
prov'd from the
quality of the
Writers.*

Nor should th' *Epistle*. to the *Hebrews* wrote ;
Or two reputed *Johns*, be spurious thought,
Or the *Apocalyps* of doubtful Fame
Twixt *John* th' *Apostle*, and one of his Name :

The

The quality of Books is most esteem'd :
 Some Histories have been authentick deem'd,
 Whose Authors never did themselves declare ;
 Thus the Account o' th' *Alexandrian* War,
 Does with a gen'ral Reputati'on pass, (was,
 Since part of what he writes the Author plainly
 So since the Authors of the Books we cite,
 Liv'd in the very times of which they write,
 And as they add themselves, partakers were
 Of Gifts, which fell to an Apostle's share ;
 It is enough our full belief to gain :
 If any say these qualities they feign,
 And to some Books fictiti'ous names did give :
 They urge what none that think can e're believe ;
 As if who preach up Truth, and Piety,
 Should venture without any cause to lie,
 Which not all good Men only, would refuse,
 But to forbid by Law the *Romans* chuse.

The Books which the new Cov'nant, then,
 declare,
 Were doubtless wrote by them, whose Names
 they bear.

Or such, at least, as they themselves profess :
 And, what there is like reason to confess,
 The things of which they wrote the Authors
 Nor could desire to mix what was untrue : (knew,
 For Falshood we no other grounds receive,
 Than Ign'rance, or intention to deceive. (those,
Matthew, John, Peter, Jude, were known of
 Whom Christ attest his words, and Actions
 chose ;

And therefore needs must know the things they
 And this to *James* may be apply'd as well, (tell,

V.
*That the Pen-
 men wrote the
 Truth, because
 they had know-
 ledge of the things
 which they
 wrote.*

Being

Of the Truth of

Be'ing an Apostle, or to Christ of kin,
 And Bishop of *Jerusalem* had bin,
 Advanc'd by the Apostles to that See:
 St. *Paul* from Error must have been as free,
 When what he learn'd from Christ he did declare,
 Being rapt above the Regions of the Air:
 To him, or *Luke*, who always clos'd his side,
 For what Christ did, Faith ought not be deny'd:
 That *Luke* did know, 'tis easy to suppose,
 What of our Saviour's Life and Death he shows;
 Being born hard by, and having travell'd o're
 The places Christ had visited before,
 And had, Eye-witnesses of what he writes
 Often consulted, as himself recites;
 Many with whom he Friendship did contract
 Besides Apostles, could attest the Fact,
 Some whose Diseases at Christ's word had fled,
 Who saw him living after being dead.
 If *Tac'itus*, and *Suetoni'us*, are believ'd,
 In things which happ'ned long before they liv'd,
 Because they're diligent Enquirers thought;
 Rather should one esteem what *Luke* has wrote.
 Of *Mark* a constant Fame is known to pass,
 That he Companion to St. *Peter* was,
 And what he wrote should have the like esteem,
 As if St. *Peter* dictated to him:
 And farther hardly any thing is there,
 But what th' Apostles Writings do declare:
 Nor could the Writer of the things (a) reveal'd,
 When God large folds of Providence unscal'd,
 Have been impos'd upon in what he saw;
 Or he, who wrote (b) to them o'th' Jewish Law,
 In what he says from th' holy Spirit came,
 Or the Apostles witnessing the same.

(a) Apocal.

(b) Author to
the Hebrews.

That

That they to cheat with Lies could not design,
 Mention'd before, we always should subjoin,
 When we would reinforce that Law divine,
 Which from our preaching King at first was spread,
 With his return to life from being dead.
 Who Witnesses of ill intent'ion blame,
 The grounds of such their ill intent'ion name;
 Here can be none: If any say they feign,
 That they the cause they manag'd might maintain,
 For such a cause why should they so contend,
 Which no advantage here could recommend?
 Nor did they any dangers thereby shun,
 For that alone they did all hazards run,
 And, as to worldly Goods, were quite undone:
 No Man can therefore think they chose this cause,
 But in obedience to God's holy Laws;
 Which would not have encourag'd Falsties,
 Chiefly in that wherein Salvation lies.
 So ill a charge these things with strength oppose;
 The pious Doctrines which they did propose,
 Their Lives unspotted, and so free from blame,
 That their worst foes their Ign'rance only name,
 No proper Parent of invented tale:
 To shew their faithfulness this should not fail,
 That their own faults they leave upon record,
 That all forsook, and Peter thrice deni'd their
 (Lord.

VI.
*And because they
 would not lie.*

But God himself did witness to them bear,
 Whilst he by Wonders did their Truth declare;
 On which since they, and all Men of their way,
 Such mighty strels with such assurance lay,
 And to the Publick Scrutiny advance
 The Times, and Places, ev'ry Circumstance;
 The Magistrates concern'd, did they so please,
 The truth or falshood might have learnt with ease.

VIII.
*A Confirmation
 of the Fidelity
 of the Authors
 from the Mira-
 cles they
 wrought.*

This

Of the Truth of

This too th' assisting hand of Heav'n do's shew,
 That many spake the Tongues they never knew,
 And Pains fled suddenly in publick view.
 Nor were they terrifi'd from what they prest,
 To think the ruling *Jews* were foes protest,
 Nor were the *Romans* less inclin'd to close
 With what might them for Novelties expose.
 Nay *Jews* and *Pagans*, of the Times most high,
 That these had Wonders wrought durst not deny.
 St. *Peter's* Mir'cles *Phlegon* does report,
 An Annalist o'th' Emp'rour *Adrian's* Court:
 And *Christians* pleading before any State,
 Urge all these facts, as being past debate:
 That at the Tombs of Martyrs there remain'd
 A wondrous Pow'r, they publicly maintain'd;
 And that throughout some Ages it did last;
 Which if untrue, they might with shame be cast,
 When they were put to justify their Cause,
 Before Dispensers of the Civil Laws:
 So frequent were the Prodigies there wrought,
 Of them such uncontested Proofs were brought;
 As even *Porphyry* himself confess.
 With what's already said we well might rest;
 Yet there's an heap of Arguments behind,
 Which may commend those Books to 'a serious
 mind.

VIII.

The Truth of the
 Writings con-
 firm'd, in that
 they contain ma-
 ny things which
 the Event has
 prov'd to be re-
 veal'd from

In them are many things plainly fore-shown,
 Which no Man could by nat'ral skil have known;
 Th' event declaring them from God alone.
 As the (a) large-sudden-spreading of that way,
 And that (b) no Age should see its pow'r decay,
 That it should (c) be rejected by the *Jews*,
 While *Gentiles* far remote obedience chuse:
 Heaven. (a) Mat. 13. 33, &c. John 12. 32. (b) Luke 1. 33. Mat. 28.
 20. John 14. 16. (c) Mat. 21. 43, &c.

That

the Christian Religion.

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That 'twould the hatred of the *(d)* *Jews* procure, *(d)* Mat. 16. 23.
 What Cru'lties for *Christ's* Name Men should en- *(e)* Mat. 10. 21.
 The *(e)* siege, and dismal ruin to invade : *(dure)* 39. & 23. 34.
 That *(f)* City, where the *Jews* their Worship paid ; *(f)* Mat. 23.
 That there the Temple should be left forlorn, Luk. 21. 20, 24.
 With the *(g)* Calamities still to be born. *(g)* Mat. 23.
 Add here, if God regard our mortal state, 35, &c.
 Chiefly in what t'^his Worship does relate,
 He cannot suffer Errors to abound,
 Where nothing but his Honour Men propound.

But for the sacred Books this proof supplies,
 That of all Christian Sects did e're arise,
 Scarce any has been found that these denys.
 Some the whole Volume for authentick take,
 And they who doubts concerning any make,
 Others receive which do with them agree ;
 When yet we such warm differences see,
 That what one Party for their Rule have chose,
 Others would shun, if 'twere but to oppose.

IX.

*As also from the
care becoming
God in preven-
ting suppositi-
ous Books.*

Indeed some Christians did those Books disown
 Which were against their darling notions known,
 Either, who, out of hatred to the *Jews*,
 Their God, and Law, did with reproaches use,
 Or, fearing Evils *Christians* were to bear,
 Themselves deceitfully did *Jews* declare.
 But by all *Christians* these abandon'd were ;
 While, as they were by the Apostles taught,
 No differences unkind Divisions wrought,
 So they did not from Piety withdraw :
 These, who adult'rate thus the Christi'an Law,
 May meet Conviction in what's said above,
 Where that there is *(a)* one Deity we prove, *(a)* Lib. 1.
Sect. 1.

X.

*Answer to the
Objection in that
divers Books
were rejected
by some.*

Who

(b) Lib. i. 5.6. Who into being (b) the Creation spake :
 Nay, ev'n the Books they for authentick take,
 Shew that the *Hebrew* God did all things make :

(c) Exod. 33. He was by *Moses* represented (c) good,
 19. But is thro' *Jesus* better understood.
 The other sort of Men we will confute,
 Where we against the real *Jews* dispute.
 In the mean while this wonderful may seem,
 That with these Men St. *Paul* has no esteem :
 More Churches no Apostle did erect,
 And those stupendous Works he did effect,
 Were then by Christians publickly maintain'd,
 When they might be discover'd if they feign'd :
 If it be granted Miracles he wrought,
 What colourable ground can then be brought,
 We should his heavenly Visions disbelieve ;
 Or what he says, he did from Christ receive ?
 But if on Christ he did so much attend,
 That he would nothing teach, him to offend ;
 Durst he have ventur'd with a lie t' impose ?
 His Doctrine, most condemn'd, who can oppose,
 Where, from their Ritu'al, *Jews* discharg'd he
 shows ?

Nothing but Truth its self could this procure :

(d) Phil. 3. 5. He (d) Circumcision did before endure :

(e) Acts 16. 3. (e) Some voluntary Proofs in him, they saw
 Of deference pay'd unto the Jewish Law,

(f) 2 Cor. 12. And to more (f) hardships did for Christ aspire,

10. Than did the Rigor of that Law require :
 These things, by no means pleasing to the Ear,
 He did to all his Followers declare ;

Instead of one, the *Jews* no more afford,

(g) 1 Tim. 4. 5. To keep all days for (g) Sabbaths to the Lord ;

(b) 2 Cor. 6. (b) Instead of some small charge did them beset,

4. 5. To bear with equal Mind the loss of all ;

And

And for the Blood of Beasts, they us'd to slay,
 Our own an Offering to our God to pay.
 Nay he affirms, that hands with him were joyn'd
 By (i) *Peter, John, and James*, all of one Mind; (i) *Gal. 2. 9.*
 Had it been false, he durst not this proclaim,
 When they might have deny'd it to his shame.
 Excepting then, those we before observ'd,
 Who scarce to bear the Christi'an Name deserv'd,
 The manifest consent of all beside,
 Who with these Books, as sacred, have comply'd,
 Joyn'd to the Miracles their Writers wrought,
 And God's (k) peculiar care of such things taught; (k) *Sect. 9.*
 Should be enough to quiet doubting Minds;
 When for all Histories of other kinds,
 Which are not of such Proofs as these possess;
 No man will their Authority contest,
 Unless some Reason do against them weigh,
 Which none, that well considers, here can say.

If any say these Books such things contain
 Which, as impossible, no Credit gain;
 It soon appears that the Objection's vain.
 We have shown above the Pow'r of the most High
 In things that carry no (l) Repugnancy,
 Tho they by far all humane reach exceed,
 Such are the things that Admiration breed;
 Those hidden Vertues Nature never knew,
 And after Death seeing the Moon's renew.

XI.
*Answer to the
 Objection, that
 these Books seem
 to contain things
 impossible.*
 (l) *Lib. 2.
 Sect. 7.*

Nor is there greater weight in what they move,
 Who somethings there would against Reason
 prove:

XII.
*Of things con-
 trary to Reason.*

More Wit or Learning can such Men pretend,
 Than did from the first times these Books defend.

- What e're we with right Reason shew'd t'agree,
In lively Characters you there will see;
- (*m*) Lib. 1. §. 1. That God (*m*) exists, and is in Essence (*n*) one,
(*n*) Sect. 2. Possess of all (*v*) Perfection ever known,
(*v*) Sect. 3, 4, 5. Pow'r, Wisdom, Goodness, Life, beyond degree,
- (*p*) Lib. 1. §. 6. That the whole (*p*) Universe he caus'd to be,
(*q*) *ib.* Sect. 10. That he alone (*q*) preserves things what they are,
(*r*) Sect. 11. But (*r*) chiefly Man, his more immediate care:
- (*s*) Lib. 2. That he both (*s*) can, and will, fully reward
Sect. 14. Those, who him only, as their End regard.
- (*t*) *ib.* Sect. 16. That we our (*t*) loose Desires should bridle in:
- (*u*) Lib. 1. §. 6. That all the race of Mortals are of (*u*) kin;
From whence an Argument of force does prove,
That we should one another truly love.
Reason's a Guide deceitful, very weak,
If to know any thing beyond we seek,
Or of God's Nature, or his Sovereign Will:
What lew'd Dissentions all the Schools did fill,
While best Philosophers betray'd their want
of Skill!
- Nor need this be a wonder, since we find
They little understood of humane Mind,
And how can the Supream then be defin'd?
The Prudent know, that it much danger brings
To search into the purposes of Kings:
And that the search however would be vain.
But what Conjecture can expect t'attain,
To what th' Almighty freely does ordain?
That 'tis not to be known *Plato* did hold,
Unless an Oracle the secret told:
But then no Oracle that ever was,
Had proofs so clear, as the new Cov'enant has:
Nor ever yet did Man attempt to prove,
That any Revelati'on from above

Did, of God's Nature, or his Will, make known
What is repugnant to what there is shown:
Some things of middle nature we may view,
Which of themselves claim'd no obedience due,
Or else in which no turpitude did stand,
Which before *Christ* had licence, or command ;
These Books for want of such, are no less full ;
Since later Laws may former disanul.

XIII.

But some their doubts concerning them declare,
Upon the disagreeing senses there :

*Answer to an
Objection, that
some things in
these Books are
inconsistent with
each other.*

Yet this should credit add with them that find,
How they for Faith and Doctrine are conjoyn'd,
So as in other Writings ne're was seen,
Amongst the Learn'd that ever yet have been,
Whether you *Jews*, or *Greeks*, or *Romans* name,
In ev'ry Science Men of greatest Fame :
Of ev'ry Sect some Men will disagree,
This we in *Zenophon* and *Plato* see :
Men from themselves are often diff'rent known,
Either forgetting what before had gone,
Or being doubtful what to fix upon :
But all those Writings which we Sacred call,
About those things to no division fall,
Which do the Rules of Faith and Life contain,
Or how *Christ* liv'd & dy'd, and liv'd again ;
And they agree entirely in the main.
Indeed in circumstances of no weight,
We sometimes find occasion of debate ;
But many things, which lie from us conceal'd,
Might all these seeming diff'rences have heal'd ;
Or, that like things at diff'rent times abound,
Or Names ambiguous do the Mind confound ;
Or had one Man, or Place, Names more than one ;
And such-like circumstances, now unknown :

F

But

But this them from imputed fraud may free ;
 Who lie by compact, will in all agree.
 If some slight disagreement still appear,
 Which will no Reconciliati'on bear ;
 We ought not therefore all these Books suspect,
 Unless we will all History reject ;
 For we as much may of that kind perceive,
 In those which we without dispute receive :
Polybi'us, and *Herodotus* to name,
Livy, and *Plutarch*, Authors of great fame :
 How much more equal is it not to doubt,
 When it appears the Writers were devout ;
 And thought it criminal, things false to tell ?
 We by extrinick Proofs might such refel.

XIV.

Answer to an
 Objection taken
 from outward
 Testimonies,
 where 'tis shown
 that they make
 more for these
 Books.

But I affirm, none such are to be found ;
 Unless our doubts on later times we ground,
 Where Enemies the Christi'an Name would }
 wound.

We cannot such for Witnesses receive ;
 Nay, foreign Proofs confirm what we believe.
 That *Jesus* suffer'd, *Jews* and *Heathens* taught, }
 And that he and his Follow'rs Wonders wrought, }
 Some forty years from Christ *Josephus* wrote, }
 Who does in Terms the most perspic'ous own,
 What was by *Herod*, *Pilate*, *Festus*, done ;
Felix, *John Baptist*, and *Gamali'el* names,
 And how *Jerusalem* expir'd in Flames :
 The *Talmudists* the same fully relate :
Tacitus tells th'effects of *Nero's* hate,
 When he against Christi'anity did rage :
 And several Books were extant in that Age,
 (Such was old *Phlegon's* we before did name)
 And publick Records menti'oning the same

To

To which the Christi'ans commonly appeal'd ;
Nor was the Star, pointing at Christ, conceal'd :
They name the Earth-quake, and Eclipse o'th' Sun,
Against the Course in which Nature had run,
When yet the Moon at Full felt not the loss,
About the time when Christ was on the Cross.

No other difficulty I can natter,
But that the Writings are not still the same :
The fate of other Writings we must own,
To have betided these may here be shown :
The Copier's Neglect, or faulty Will,
If not his want of necessary Skill,
In Letters, Syllables, or Words, might wrong,
By change, omission, some of them too long :
But these things should no Controversy raise,
Being but incident to length of days :
But that by fraud, or any other ways,
In Doctrinals all Copies vicious were,
Or where they memorable Facts declare,
Don't or by Books, or Witnesses, of those
times, appear.

XV.
*Answer to an
Objection, about
the Scriptures
having been
changed.*

What ever of that kind is offer'd since,
Must pass for Railing, not for Evidence.
This may be thought enough to silence those,
Who for Mutations holy Writ oppose ;
On whom it lies not to object, but prove ;
Since they'd a settled Reputati'on move ;
But we their vain pretence may soon detect,
Who what ne'er was, nor can be, here object.
Before we prov'd, to any equal Mind,
The Books were their's whose Names affixt we
find ;

It follows then there was no change of Books :
And if to every part of them one locks,

Of the Truth of

No change of part materi'al can be found ;
Some end who made the Change must needs
propound :

That, where the Change was made, should
differ more

From those remaining what they were before,
Than here the sharpest search could e're explore :

Nay, as before was in this Tract observ'd,
A wonderful Consent's throughout preserv'd :

Besides, when any of th'Apostles wrote,
Or Men who Apostolical were thought,
Sincere Professors of the Christi'an Name,
As their concern for Truth it well became,
Must needs have us'd all diligence, to gain
The valu'd Transcripts of what they maintain,
Through *Europe, Asia, Egypt*, these diffus'd
(For the Greek Tongue among all these was
us'd)

Could not but spread as far as Christ was known.
Consider farther, as before was shown,
That some Originals were seen to last,
Until the second Century was past :

A Book of which so many Copies were,
Preserv'd not only by a private eare,
But by whole Churches which did Christ obey,
No Man to have been counterfeit can say.

Add, that 'tis evident the sacred Text
Was read in sev'ral Tongues i'th' Ages next,

The *Syriac, Ethiopic, Arabic*,
And *Latin* too, agreeing with the *Greek*,
In all those weighty things of which we speak.

Farther their Writings to our hands are brought,
Whom the Apostles, or their Follow'rs, taught ;
Who many Passages from them do quote,
Agreeing with that Sense which now we note.

Nor

r in the Church was any Man possess
 such Authority above the rest,
 at they'd comply, if he a Change had prest. }
 is *Irenæus*, and *Tertullian*, shew,
 is *Cyprian* too, who without fear withdrew
 from those who then were most reputed sage :
 1, if we come to the succeeding Age,
 we find Men of best judgments, greatest parts,
 who had run their Stages thro' the lib'ral Arts,
 for the utmost search these to receive,
 and of Orig'nal Purity believe :
 proof of this divided parties joyn ;
 who believe the World a work divine,
 and *Christ* the Founder of a sacred Law ;
 who against changing would the other awe :
 nor yet did any Sect that licence take,
 at to have chang'd them for their side would
 make ;
 which hence is seen, that when e're they dispute,
 each would from thence his Opposite confute.
 What's urg'd of Providence concern'd for all,
 every part of these alike will fall,
 nor ought it of our God to be believ'd,
 that he would suffer Men to be deceiv'd
 in what's of greatest moment to the Mind)
 who had his Honour above all design'd,
 and next the way to Happiness would find. }
 nor many thousands such as these to run
 to those Errors which they could not shun !
 this may be thought sufficient to maintain,
 that the New Testament does there contain,
 and there at large is our Religion seen.
 yet since th' Almighty's Pleasure it has been,

XVI.
For the Autho-
rity of the
Books of the
Old Covenant.

The Truths the *Jews* believ'd should now ap-
pear,
Which no small Light to our Religion bear,
'Tis not amiss to shew their Credit here.
What prov'd those other Books were titl'd right,
Will serve for these, where any shall deny't.
The Authors of those Books the *Jews* receiv'd,
Were Prophets, or most fit to be believ'd,
Such *Esdras* was, thought to have joyn'd in one,
Those scatter'd Books which went before alone;
When at that time some Prophets were alive,
Who would against an Impositi'on strive,
Such *Haggai*, *Malachi*, *Zach'ry*, were known:
To pass what was in praise of *Moses* shown;
Pagans confirm not only what he wrote,
But what of later times the *Jews* were taught:
So the *Phœnician* Annalists proclaim
David, and *Solomon*, so great in Fame,
And they their Treaties with the *Tyr's* Name;
Nebuchadonozor, with others joyn'd,
Who *Caldees* rul'd, we in *Berosus* find;
Egyptian Vaphres, *Jeremy* does name,
And *Aphr'es* in *Herodotus*, are the same.
Of *Cyrus*, and who follow'd in his charge
Until *Darius*, *Greci'ans* speake at large.
And in those Books *Josaphus* did endite,
When *Appian* to his way he would invite.
We many things may gather in a Throng,
Which to the Honour of the *Jews* belong.
And to what's mention'd here we well may add,
What we from *Strabo*, and from *Trogus* had:
But we who in our suff'ring Lord believe,
These Books without disputing should receive;
Since there is scarce a Book but ours do cite,
And so far to agree with theirs delight;

And

the Christian Religion.

71

And when Christ blames the Doctors of their
And what in the proud *Pharisee* he saw, (Law,
He never menti'ons any Change they made,
In what from any Prophet was convey'd,
Or that supposititious Books they brought,
Nor can this after Christ of them be thought:
Consid'ring how the wandering *Hebrew* Sheep,
Scatter'd throughout the World, these Books
did keep.

Ten of the Tribes first from *Assyr'ia* led,
And after two, did through all *Media* spread;
And after *Cyrus* did the *Jews* restore,
Many did ramble Foreign Nati'ons o're,
These Men the *Macedoni'ans* did invite
In *Alexandria* to take delight:
The Cruelty *Antiochus* did shew,
The Civil Wars the *Asinadaans* knew,
The Wars which *Pompey*, and which *Sossius* made,
Did force the *Jews*, in various parts to trade,
These did the *Cyrenaic* Region fill,
The Cities too of *Asia* saw their Skill;

This *Macedonia*, *Lycania*, knew,
The Isles of *Crete*, *Cyprus*, and others too:
That anciently at *Rome* they num'rous were,
Both *Horace*, *Martial*, *Juvenal* declare.
No Art could People, so divided, cheat;
Nor could they have conspir'd t' a Fraud so great.
Almost three hundred years e're *Christ* was here,
Some Kings of *Egypt* made their care appear
To propagate those Books the *Jews* admire,
Whilst they the *Seventy's* Version did require:
So in like sense the *Greeks* did them receive,
Whence with a change 'twas harder to deceive;
The Language which we from *Caldeans* take,
And that which at *Jerusalem* they spake,

Of the Truth of

That is half-*Syriack*, help't these Books to spread,
Part before *Christ*, part after he was dead :

Aquila, Sym'chus, Theodosion,

Each to have turn'd them into *Greek* are known,
Which with the *Seventy, Origin* did view,
With others, in the main all of them true,
In things of weight none can a difference shew. }

Philo liv'd famous in *Calig'la's* Reign,

Josephus to *Vespasian's* did remain ;

Both cite, out of the Books among the *Jews*,

The very same which at this day we use :

And many then of *Jews, Christians* became,

Who'd certainly what change they found pro-
claim,

If't were of moment, which they might compare

With the most ancient Copies that there were ;

But far from doing this, they oft delight,

In the same sense with *Jews*, their Books to cite.

But any Crime 'gainst *Jews* has more pretence,

Than either Falshood, or else Negligence.

With such Devotion they these Books imbrace,

That they will tell you ev'ry Letter's place.

Add yet a stronger proof, which last we range,

These Books the *Jews* would not on purpose
change,

Since thence, who for their Saviour *Christ* receive,

Prove strongly, or at least as they believe,

That he they worship, that *Messias* was,

Of whom the Promise to the *Jews* did pass ;

And none can think since that dispute arose,

The *Jews* would, had they Pow'r, a Change
have chose.

LIB.

LIB. IV.

TO see Mens Perils while we sit at ease,
Is what does to much Human Nature please;
But it becomes us Christi^ans to rejoyce,
Not only at our happiness of choice;
But to endeavour, to our Pow'r, to free
Those who are tost in Errors stormy Sea,
And to have them our Happiness partake,
T'wards this great end the former Books did
make;

Because the proof of Truth doth that expose,
Which do's it self against that Truth oppose,
But since all other Worships that are known,
The *Pagan*, *Jewish*, that the *Turks* do own,
Besides the Errors common unto all,
Have each what to its proper share do fall,
And against ours, in different methods fight;
I think I shall do Truth the greatest right,
If I of each make the dispute entire:

Which doing, of the Readers I desire,
That laying all Parti^ality aside, (ty'd,
And what e're Customs long have held them }
They'd use unbiass'd judgment for their Guide,
While with us such Impediments have place,
We go with Fetters unto Truth's embrace.

First then, against the *Pagans* we dispute,
And these we did before enough confute,

there is but one God: That created Spirits are good, or bad; the good not to be worshipped without the direction of the most High God.

I.
A particular confutation of the Religions opposite to Christianity.

II.
And first of Paganism: That

If

Of the Truth of

If they believe more than one Pow'r above,
 In an eternal equal state to move;
 We having shew'd only one God to reign,
 Who all things of himself did first ordain;
 If of created Minds their God they make,
 Either for good, or bad, we these must take:
 If good they say; First, let them have a care,
 Lest they are cheated with a Name so fair,
 For it is very dang'rous erring there;
 Lest Foes they take for Friends, and those that sell,
 Instead of those who should God's Pleasure tell:
 In Reason too we should some diff'rence find.
 For Worship paid to them, and the first Mind:
 Let's know what order is assign'd to each,
 What good respectively to us they reach;
 That we may judg what Honour the great King
 Intends we to those lower Pow'rs should bring:
 Since none of these they can pretend to know;
 This how uncertain is their way may show:
 How much more certain they were not to err,
 If to the Chief this Worship they transfer:
 This Place held the duty of the Wife;
 This does he with more confidence advise;
 Since the good Minds be'ing Servants to the Best,
 If him they please they may securely rest,
 Of their good Offices they can't but be
 perfect.

III.

That Evil Spi-
 rits are ador'd
 by Pagans, and
 how impious a
 thing it is.

Then no slight Arguments believ perswade,
 That unto evil Spirits Pagans pray'd.
 First, that their Followers they did not bring
 Unto the Worship of th'eternal King;
 Nay, did his Worship what they could impair,
 Or strove with him to have an equal share:

Then

Then they did strongly Magistrates incite,
Against the Men who worship'd God aright;
And the misguided Rabble urg'd their pains:
When yet the Poets in licentious strains,
With Parricides and Rapes their Gods did charge;
And *Epicurus*, that things go at large,
Without the Conduct of a Pow'r Supream,
Was bold to make the subject of his Theam.
And the most diff'rent Rites one Compound

made,
Egyptian, Phrygian, Greek together laid,
The *Thursans* too, they did at *Rome* perswade.
They ridicul'd the *Jewish* way alone;
As is i'th Epigrams and Satyrs shown;
And sometimes Banishment shortned their Woes:
Then against Christi'ans Persecuti'ons rose;
Of which the only cause to be assign'd,
Is, that they worship'd the Eternal Mind;
That thus the Gods they serv'd their Honours
Fearful of him alone who all engroft. (lost,
The third Exception's taken from the way,
In which they worship'd those they did obey,
Such as could never please an honest Mind.
Thus there we humane Sacrifices find;
Themselves in Temples naked Men expose,
And Jew'dness reign'd in their most solemn shows;
These Rites now in *America* proceed,
And *Africa* these Monsters still does breed:
Nay, further yet, those there have been, and are,
Who worship Minds which evil they declare.
Thus, *Ariman* a God the *Persians* made,
And *Greek* to *Cacodemons* worship paid:
The *Latins* to *Vejo's*; and *Indians* yet,
With *Ethiopians* to such Pow'rs submit.

Of the Truth of

And what more truly impious can be found?
 For of Religious Worship what's the ground?
 But the belief of Goodness we admire,
 Which we't express i'th' humblest way desire:
 If a known evil Spirit this receive,
 Our selves the lye to our own Worship give;
 This too no less than Treason must be thought,
 When th' Honour which due to our King is
 taught,

Is not withdrawn alone, but giv'n to those,
 Who are *his Rebels*, or at least his Foes.
 But they are sottish, who e're count upon't,
 That a good God will not avenge th' Affront;
 They should consider that his Clemency,
 And Justice no less infinite, agree;
 Where bold-fac'd Wickedness all bounds exceeds,
 Justice, as of necessity, proceeds.
 Nor do they less deserve Rebukes to bear,
 Who say they only worship out of Fear;
 When He whom we believe supremely good,
 Is, as communicative, understood,
 And thence from Him all other Natures rose;
 From whence this Consequence directly flows:
 That he does use an Absolute Command,
 O're all these Workmanships of his own hand;
 So that from none of them can that proceed,
 But he at his free Pleasure could impede;
 Which being granted, we collect with ease,
 Who e're our God so great, so good, does please,
 Can ne're from evil Spirits have that hurt,
 Which to good purposes God won't convert;
 Nor can the evil Spirits that command,
 Which we should not on that account withstand;

For

the Christian Religion.

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For when the guise of Good the Evil bear,
Then ought we of their flights the more beware,
The Gifts of Enemies deceitful are.

Some there have been, and yet are known
To have pray'd,
To Men whose Honours in the Dust are laid :
This Worship should have proper marks assign'd,
Distinct from what is paid the Sov'raign Mind,
And thence some good we should expect to find;
But this their Worshippers could never shew,
Not knowing what these Souls departed do,
But against this we chiefly should inveigh,
That many Men to whom they this did pay,
Were more than others for some Vices fam'd,
And thus for Drunkenness is *Bacchus* nam'd ;
For Lust thus did their *Hercules* surpass ;
Against his Brother *Rom'us* impious was ;
And so against his Father was their *Jove* ;
So that the Honour paid to them, would prove
A great Reproach to the true *God* above ;
Who does in Probity chiefly delight :
Against it self they make Religion fight ; (Rays,
While what should scatter Vice with conqu'ring
Is taught to flatter it with its own Praise.

IV.
*Against the Wor-
ship which is
Paganism is ex-
hibited to Men
departed this
Life.*

The Stars and Elements ev'n long before,
Fire, Water, Air, and Earth Men did adore :
But nothing is more brutish than this way :
Since the chief part of Worship is to pray,
Th'Objects of this should have Intelligence ;
That th'Elements have none is plain to Sense.
If any say Stars are with this endu'd ;
The ground of such their Fancy ne're was shew'd,

V.
*Against wor-
shipping Stars
and Elements.*

By

Of the Truth of

By th' Operations, which their Natures tell;
 We cannot judg that this to them beſel;
 Nay, the unalter'd Courſe in which they move,
 The contrary with mighty ſtrength does prove;
 This argues they no freedom have of Will;
 But do another's Purpoſes fulfil;
 We their ſubſerviency to Man have ſhew'd;
 Whence we ſhould think our ſelves the be-
 endu'd,

Our better part unto our God more near,
 And for that likenefs, unto him more dear:
 Therefore our ſelves we ought not to debase,
 To what's ſubjected to us through God's Grace;
 Off'rings of Praise for them by us are brought,
 Which how to pay they never can be taught.

VI.
*Against wor-
 shipping of brute
 Beasts.*

Some in their Worſhip lower yet do fall,
 And thus on Beaſts for Aid ~~Beasts~~ call:
 A ſhew of Reaſon ſome may ſeem to ſhare,
 What it's when we with Man's would it com-
 pare?

And their Conſeptions, whatſoe're they frame,
 Ne're from within by words, or writing, came,
 Their Works in kind, and manner, are the ſame.
 Numbers and Meaſures earl they comprehend?
 Or how the Courſe o'th' Heavenly Hoſt does bend?
 Man on the other ſide, of ſtrength but ſmall,
 Into his Snares makes Birds, Beaſts, Fiſhes, fall,
 Theſe by his Wit he brings under his Law,
 Ev'n Elephants and Lions keeps in awe,
 Horſes and Oxen makes together draw;
 Things the moſt nox'ious uſeful to him makes;
 And thus from Serpents whoſome Med'cines
 Their Bodies frame, and ſcite of ev'ry part, (takes;
 Unknown to them, do not eſcape his Art:

Thence

ence he the use and worth of them can tell,
 hat *Species*, and what *Genus*, each besel :
 en he the Structure of's own Body views,
 hich him by far the nobler Creature shews :
 hoe're compare aright, so far will be
 om thinking one of these a Deitie :
 n he would rather think God did ordain,
 a vicari'ous Pow'r o're them to reign.

Latins, and *Greeks*, we find, Devoti'on paid,
 what of no Subsistence Nature made,
 t were meer Accidents to things that were :
 pudence, Fever, and the like, to spare :
 alth, which in this did much more justly share,
 t a true temp'rament of parts we find :
 rtune, that Deity acknowledg'd blind,
 ut a set of Chances to one's Mind :
 Affections, Anger, Fear, warm Hope, and

VII.
 Against wor-
 shipping things
 which are no
 Substances.

Love,
 others which from Good, or Ill, do move,
 we consider them remote, or nigh,
 aicfly i'th' moti'ons of the Blood do lie,
 th' Animal Spirits carry'd thence are known :
 f these none have a motion of their own,
 t on the Empire of the Will depend,
 : least for their Direction, and their End.
 f Virtues Worshippers with them were seen ;
 udence, which lies in choise of the right mean,
 hen we pursue what's represented good ;
 he braving Dangers, counted Fortitude :
 i'stice, in keeping from another's right,
 nd Temp'rance moderating our delight :
 hese Dispositions unto Good we find,
 erled by a long Custom in the Mind ;

But

Of the Truth of

But these, as they encrease, so may decay,
 And, much neglected, vanish quite away :
 Honour, to which they oft did Temples raise,
 Is known to lie but in another's Praise ;
 This oft the Good have mist, the Bad receiv'd,
 So easie 'tis for Man to be deceiv'd !
 Since no Subsistence then these have at all ;
 And so below things of Subsistence fall ;
 Nor can these understand the zealous Pray'r,
 With which our Rev'rence of them we declare,
 To worship such Reason must disallow :
 Rather to Him we should devoutly bow,
 Who only gives, and can to us preserve,
 What we the most to be admir'd observe.

VIII.

*Answer to the
 Argument of the
 Gentiles taken
 from Miracles
 done among
 them.*

But then to Miracles *Pagans* appeal,
 As if the Truth these of their Worship seal :
 Whereas we may with Justice them suspect :
 Their Sages many, as unprov'd, reject.
 Night and Retirement were for some the Scene,
 To others but few Witnesses have been,
 Such as with ease might swallow down a Cheat,
 From subtle Priests, well practis'd in Deceit :
 Not knowing Nature many did admire,
 And qualities occult their search did tire ;
 With admiration thus some Load-stones saw
 To its embrace the distant Iron draw :
Simon did in these Arts successful prove ;
 And thence did *Apollonius* wonder move.
 Some things by such we must effected own,
 Which have a Pow'r more than of Nature
 shown,
 Or what Man could draw forth from that
 alone ;

But

the Christian Religion:

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Yet these do not imply a Pow'r Divine,
 To which we should Omnipotence assigne:
 But intermediate Spir'its for this suffice,
 Higher than Men, yet under Deities,
 Who being very nimble, strong, and wise,
 May bring together what remote does lie,
 And thence compose things wondrous to the Eye;
 But that these Spirits cannot good be thought,
 Their Worship therefore bad, before was taught:
 And this against their Veneration Arms,
 That Men pretend to force them down with
 Charms;

When yet the wisest Heathens own it plain,
 That words the pow'r but of Perswasion gain,
 And that according as their Sense we find
 This proof may of their pravity be joyn'd,
 That oft they promis'd him or her to move,
 Against their Inclination, unto Love;
 Injurious in the Promise, or Command, (brand.
 And Humane Laws such Acts with Sorcery
 Nor is it strange, if he whom we adore
 With the Delusions of ill Spirits bore,
 To punish them who fell from him before.
 But then this may their Impotence perswade,
 That none had signal benefit by their Aid:
 If any thence return'd to Life again,
 They ne're were known in Life long to remain;
 Nor could they act like those who Life enjoy'd,
 If e're a Pow'r divine did seem employ'd,
 It never was foretold that this was done,
 That Men might into that Religion run:
 And nothing hinders but the Pow'r divine,
 Might have, what greatly differs, in design.
 As for Example, If one should believe,
 That to one blind *Passion* sight did give,

G

'Twas

'Twas that he Reputation might acquire,
To gain that Pow'r to which he did aspire,
He being one whom God before did chuse,
To execute his Judgments on the *Jews*.
For other Prodigies like cause might be,
In which we nothing of Religion see.

IX.
And from Oracles.

What was before observ'd we may apply,
When on their Oracles they would rely:
Chiefly that God may Cheats on them permit,
Who nat'lal Light, or old Tradition quit.
And generally 'twas doubtful what was meant,
The words complying with what e're event:
If any thing more plainly was foretold;
A Pow'r divine for this we need not hold;
From nat'lal Causes known it might proceed;
Physicians thus know how Diseases breed:
Much comes from due observing what has past,
For which th'experience'd need no Figure cast.
But if by *Pagan* Prophets e're was shewn,
What had dependance on God's Will alone,
No cause of which besides that e're was known;
It was not to confirm one *Pagan* Rite,
But rather it against them all did fight.
Thus *Virgil*, not discerning what was meant,
In his fourth Eclogue, yet, did represent,
What some old *Sybil* scatter'd leaves did shew,
Of Christ, and the great Benefits t'ensue.

Vid. Cic. de
Divinatione
lib. 2. Eum
quem re verâ
Regem habebamus
appel-
landum quoque
esse regem si
salvi esse vellemus.

Those Leaves to shelter noble Fruit were made,
While they an universal King did shade,
Whom to obey, if we'd be happy, they perswade.
That he who of this Pow'r should be possess'd,
Should make his Progress from the brightned East
And *Porphyry* an Oracle does name,
Where th' *Hebrew* God *Moses* does proclaim,

To

To be the only God the World should fear,
 While others vanish'd into empty Air :
 If this *Apollo's* Votaries obey'd,
 Ev'n his own Worship must aside be laid :
 But if their Worship still they paid at large ;
 They'd their own Deity with falshood charge.
 If by their Oracles these Spir'its design'd,
 Any advantages to humane kind ;
 Some certain Rule of Life they needs must give,
 In following which Men happily might live :
 Yet they nor Rule, nor Happiness, propound,
 With which their blind *Devotos* might be
 crown'd :
 Nay, on the contrary, we've-often found,
 They in their Verses worst of Kings did praise,
 And Wrestlers unto sacred Honours raise ;
 Unto unlawful Loves they did incite,
 And catching Wealth without regard to Right,
 Encourag'd Slaughters, and a vicious Train,
 The bare reciting which, our Leaves would stain.

This against *Paganism* strong proof supplies,
 That it on humane Force so much relies,
 That whensoever that was not on its side,
 As if through that it stood, it quickly dy'd :
 But where *Christi'anity*, or *Turkism*, reign'd,
 Only in story th'Ethnick Rites remain'd ;
 When yet Christianity was known to grow,
 Ev'n with the Blood did from its Martyrs flow.
 This Conquest's gain'd in spite of all the Pow'rs
 Of the enrag'd, and bloody Emperours.
 Nor could learn'd *Julian's* Wit keep up their way,
 But sensibly it fell into decay,
 Nor Force, nor high Descent, against it brought ;
 A Carpenter, the Founder's Father, thought ;

X.
*The Pagan Religion rejected ;
 because it fail'd
 of its self as
 soon as human:
 Aids were with-
 drawn.*

Nor did that way which made all others fail,
 With flow'rs of Rhet'rick on Men's Minds prevail;
 None of these Ornaments their Speech did grace,
 Who first perswaded Men Christ to embrace :
 Of Gifts, they being poor, made no pretence,
 Nor mov'd by Flatteries to tender Sense :
 Nay, they declar'd that Pleasures they must shun,
 And for that Law all worldly hazards run :
 And this subdu'd not *Paganism* alone,
 But ev'n the Spirits which did that Worship own,
Christ's Name of them Men's Bodies dispossess;
 And their known Voices they at that compress :
 And being ask'd, why then they silent were ?
 They were against themselves forc'd to declare,
 That where Christ was invok'd their Pow'r
 dissolv'd to Air.

XI. Some, hardly worth the labour to confute,
 Unto the Influence of Stars impute
 The rise, and progress, of Religious Rites :
 But this their Science no known Rule unites,
 And all the certainty which there is known,
 Is that from Stars there's nothing certain shown :
 But none of those effects I here do mean,
 Of which some necessary cause hath been,
 According to the Law which Nature gave,
 But what the Will of Man for causes have,
 Which being of its self entirely free,
 Can't from abroad receive necessity :
 But if th'Impressi'on from without's so strong,
 That the meere passive Will is forc'd along ;
 In vain was giv'n that grateful pow'r of Mind,
 Which we in choice, after consid'ring, find,
 The Equity of Laws could not but cease :
 From all Rewards and Penalty's that frees ;

For

For where the Act is necessary found,
 What fault to punish ; Merit to be crown'd ?
 Besides some Acti'ons of the humane Will,
 Justly deserve the Character of ill ;
 But if of these Heav'n were the proper Mint,
 As heav'nly Bodies God did so imprint,
 That they compel the Act we seem to chuse ;
 Of causing moral Ill 'twould God accuse,
 Who must be thought in full perfection good ;
 Besides his hate to Ill is understood,
 By his known Law which does from that dissuade ;
 But if he it inevitable made,
 By an effective Pow'r himself instill'd :
 'Twould shew as if things contrary he will'd ;
 That the same thing should, and should not be
 While by his impulse into Sin we run. (done,
 Some, with more probability, declare,
 That Stars first influence the ambi'ent Air,
 Our Bodies this ; and qualities conveys,
 Which in our Minds such kind of Passi'ons raise ;
 That these often entice the yielding Will,
 And their Commands it often does fulfil :
 Suppose that this were granted ne're so clear ;
 'Twould nothing make to help the questi'on here,
 For *Christ's* Religion doth withdraw the Mind,
 From things to which the Body is inclin'd :
 How then could bodily Affecti'ons move,
 The Christian way of Worship to approve ?
 And how could Stars to cause its rise be thought,
 When they only by those Affecti'ons wrought ?
 Whatever Laws to Men the Stars would give ;
 The wise and good exempted from them live ;
 Wisest Astrologers do this confess ;
 And wise were they who first did Chritt profess :

Of the Truth of

But if in Learning any force we see,
 From the Contagion of the Flesh to free ;
 Such among Christians have been ever known,
 Who in this Praise to flourish, all must own :
 Besides the learned in the Syd'ral Arts,
 Own the Effects reach but to certain parts,
 And those Effects but temporary are ;
 When this Religion yet has lasted fair,
 One thousand and six hundred Years, and more,
 It's Praises eccho'd forth from Shoar to Shoar,
 In distant Regions stretch'd out ne're so far,
 Whatever the Positi'on of the ruling Star.

XII. This to Christian'ty may Trophies raise,
'Tis shewn that the chief Principles of the Christian Religion are approv'd by wise Pagans : and if there be any thing in it hard to be believed, things of the like kind are found among the Pagans.
 That every part shines with such piercing Rays,
 Does with so fair a Countenance delight,
 That it convinces with its Native Light :
 So that enough we among Pagans find,
 Out of whose Sayings in one System joyn'd,
 All our Religious Truths we might decry :
 As that Religion don't in Rituals lie,
 But th'Efficacy in the Mind to place :
 Adultery to lie in wish't embrace :
 Not to repay the Wrongs which we receive :
 One Wife, one Husband, should together live ;
 The Bond perpetual which does them unite :
 That this, Man's Office which should most delight,
 To do to Men what good is in his pow'r,
 Chiefly where sharp necessities devour :
 From Oaths as much as may be to forbear ;
 To be content for Clothing and for Fare,
 With what the needs of Nature do require,
 But where Christian'ty still rises higher,
 And diffidence with wonder seems to strike,
 We with the wisest Pagans find the like.

What

the Christian Religion.

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What of the Souls immortal State they hold,
And Life returning unto Bodies cold,
We shew'd before. *Plato*, of *Caldees* taught,
Of the Divinity this distinction thought,
The Father and the filial Mind, from whom
He held the Universe at first to come :

He adds a Mind which over-spreads the whole,
Nor does fly *Julian* their Belief controul,
Who think the Humane Nature with Divine,
Might to compose a single Person joyn ;
Such he believ'd that *Asculapius* was,
Whom he would have from Heav'n directly pass,
To teach Mankind the helpful Art of Cures ;
Who sees not what offence Christ's Cross pro-
cures ?

Yet Heathens in their Gods the like things brook :
Some we find Servants, others Thunder-struck ;
Some into pieces cut, Wounds others took ;
Their wisest held a good Man's Joys the most,
When him his Honesty the dearest cost.

Plato, as if what was to come he found,
Says, If we a true Pattern would propound,
It must be one whose Vertue is despoil'd
Of all those Ornaments with which it smil'd :
He must be wicked thought, expos'd to scorn ;
A shameful Death must after all be born.
Patience exemplify'd unto the height,
Must by such Instances as these incite.

WILLIAM BENTLEY

WILLIAM BENTLEY

WILLIAM BENTLEY

WILLIAM BENTLEY

G 4

LIB.

LIB. V.

I.
A Refutation
of Judaism, be-
ginning with an
address to the
Jews.

THat glim'ring Light saluting by degrees,
As from a dismal Cave himself one frees,
Points out their State, who quitting th' *Ethnick*
After the Jewish Rites their Worship pay. (way,
That part of Truth, that noble entrance made,
Makes me in friendly manner Jews persuade,
What's offer'd to receive with equal Ears;
We cannot but confess that it appears,
That they from those Religious Men descend,
To whom th' Almighty Embassies did send,
By Prophets and his Min'istring Spir^{its} above;
From out of them did the *Messias* move,
And they who first preach'd up the Christian Law,
Theirs is the Stock whence Nourishment we draw,
Being ingrafted there; that they preserve
Those Oracles of God which we observe,
With the like Veneration as do they:
And with St. *Paul* most zealously we pray,
That God would suffer soon that day to dawn;
When from before their Eyes the Clouds with-
drawn;

They may discern with us the Law fulfill'd:
And, as into their Prophets was instill'd,
That we who long no sacred Cov'enant knew,
May lovingly embrace th' enlighten'd Jew,
And hand in hand that only God adore,
Whom *Abr'am, Isaac, Jacob*, serv'd before.

First,

the Christian Religion.

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First, we desire them that they would admit,
What pleading for themselves they urge as fit.
If to them any *Pagan* Question move,
How Miracles by *Moses* wrought, they prove?
They say no more, but that so constant Fame
Of their own People, did his Works proclaim;
As needs must come from those who saw the
same.

II.
*It shewn that
the Jews ought
to allow of Jesus
his Miracles as
sufficiently
prov'd.*

So, that *Elisha* multiply'd the Oil,
And purg'd th' *Affyr* from his leprous Soil;
That with new Life a Young Man did arise,
After his weeping Mother clos'd his Eyes:
And several other things of the like kind,
Among the Jews finally believ'd we find;
As from good Witnesses to them consign'd.
But that *Elijah* sprang up to the Skies,
They trust *Elisha*, thought t' ve seen him rise:
Twelve Witnesses, whose Lives none could re-
prove,
Attest t' have seen our Saviour hence remove,
As he ascended to his Throne above.
A greater Cloud of Witnesses maintain,
That after Death, they saw him live again,
Which, if considered, manifestly shew, (true.
That what he taught on Earth, must needs be
Nor can one Argument be urg'd by Jews.
But what we equally at least may use:
But to omit Authorities to press,
The Jews, and their learn'd Talmudists, confess,
That our *Messiah* things prodigious wrought;
And this might against them enough be thought;
Nor can God authorize a Doctrine more,
Than shewing Miracles upon that score.

Some

III.
An Answer to
the Objection
that these Ad-
vances were
brought in the
help of Demons.

Some to the Pow'r of Demons this impute,
Which Calumny we did before refuse;
Shewing that where Christ's Doctrine did prevail,
The Pow'r of Demons totally did fail:
That Christ in *Egypt* Magick-Arts did learn,
To have less shew of Truth we may discern,
Than the like Accusation *Pagans* raise,
To blemish *Moses* his less settled Praise,
As is in *Pliny* and *Apuleius*, seen:
But that in *Egypt* Christ had ever been,
Does only from his Follow'rs Books appear,
Who that he went an Infant thence, declare,
Moses, and other Jews, expressly own,
That he resided there to Manhood grown,
But then the Laws *Moses* and *Christ* promulg'd,
Should stop the progress of this Charge divulg'd,
Since both of them against such Arts inveigh,
As hateful to that Pow'r all should obey,
But that in *Egypt* such had ever Birth,
While Christ, or his Disciples blest the Earth;
Or any other place, who can believe,
To do what we, as done by Christ, receive?
The Dumb to speak, the Lame to walk, the Blind,
All of a sudden long with Light to find,
The Emperors, *Tiberius*, *Nero*, more,
Who spard no Coins th' utmost of this to explore,
Had th' Art thus far arriv'd had known't before,
And if the Talmud we admit as true,
The Jewish Sank'drims th' Art of Magick knew,
The better to convict the Guilty here:
And since do Christ they th' highest here did
Envy'ing that Pow'r his Miracles declare,
They would the like by the like they have done,
Or shew'd them thence, by Proofs which none
can shun.

Some

the Christian Religion.

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the Jews ascribe the Miracles Christ did,
 a Secret by King *Solomon* hid,
 for above a thousand Years had slept,
 so fierce Lions in the Temple kept:
 this was read by Christ; a Fiction bold;
 of those wondrous Lions nothing's told
 by Book of the Old Testament,
 by *Josephus*, or the Romans sent
 with *Pompey* to the Temple's spoil.
 if the Jews confess the Fact, the while,
 lows from their own *Mosaick* Law,
 none should from blest Jesus Faith with-
 draw: (*a*) *Deuter* expressly says, (draw.
 after him would other Prophets raise;
 that the People should obey them, shews,
 shewing Penalties if they refuse:
 these are *Miracles* the certain sign;
 can we more illustrious ones divine:
 he a (*b*) Prophet shall himself declare,
 make by Miracles his Title fair;
 bids them not to listen to his Speech,
 to worship other Gods should teach;
 God will (*c*) such among his People bear,
 try if to his Worship they'll adhere.
 e their Interpreters rightly collect,
 as true Prophets they should all respect,
 don't the Worship of that God divide,
 does unquall'd over all preside:
 ing enjoy'd, that in this case alone,
 should not trust the greatest Wonders shown.
 Worship to false Gods Christ taught to pay;
 shew'd it penal unto such to pray:
 es, and foll'wing Prophets, he requir'd
 secretiv'd as Men of God inspir'd:

IV.
 Or by the force of
 Words and Syl-
 lables.

V.
 It is shewn that
 Jesus his Mira-
 cles were divine,
 because he taught
 the Worship of
 one God, the
 maker of the
 World.
 (*a*) Deut.c.18.

(*b*) Deut. 13.
 1, 2, 3.

(*c*) vers. 9.

Against

Against his Miracles then nothing lies :
That he and *Moses* differ, can't suffice.

VI.

*Answer to the
Objection taken
from the difference
between the
Law of Moses
and of Jesus,
where is shown
that a more perfect
Law than
that of Moses
might be given.*

For this their Rabbies as a Rule maintain,
That he who does a Pow'r for Wonders gain,
And proves himself a real Prophet thence,
With any sacred Precept may dispence,
Except the worshipping the Pow'r Supream.
'Tis clear as if 'twere wrote with a Sun-beam,
What Legislative Pow'r with God did rest,
When unto *Moses* he his Will exprest ;
In times succeeding he the same must have.
Who in his proper Right Laws ever gave,
Is not thereby hindred from making those,
Which do directly former Laws oppose.
To urge that God's immutable, is weak,
Not of his Nature, but his Works, we speak.
The Light for Darkness, Youth for Age does
change,

- Summer for Winter, works with God not strange.
(d) Gen. 2. 17. *Adam* (d) had leave, only one Tree deny'd,
To feast himself with ev'ry Fruit beside :
The killing Men in general God forbad ;
(e) Gen. 22. 2. *Abram* (e) to slay his Son his Precept had :
Off'ring elsewhere than at th'appointed place,
(f) 1 Kings
18. 38. Now he refus'd, now (f) blest of his free Grace.
Moses his Law, besides, tho good we own ;
Dost follow that a better can't be known ?
With Children childish Talk the Parents use,
Nor to connive at faults of th'Age refuse ;
But when adult they will correct the Speech,
And Precepts of the strictest Vertue teach.
How great the beauty of an honest Mind !
And what Rewards it shall hereafter find !
(g) Heb. 8. 7. But that the Law did of (g) Perfection miss,
This to be thought a Proof sufficient is ;

That

That in those times some holy Men out-do
 Whatever by the Law they're prompted to;
Moses Revenge does partly lawful make,
 Partly the strictest Justice bids them take;
 Yet, (*b*) being wrong'd in the most high degree, (*b*) Numb. 12.
 Him praying for those Murmurers we see. V. 13. & 14. 2.
 So his (*s*) Rebelli'ous Son *David* would spare, 10, 19.
 And (*k*) bitterest Curses did with Patience bear. (*i*) 2 Sam. 18. 5.
 We read not that good Men their Wives did (*k*) 2 Sam. 16.
 Altho their Law did plainly this permit. 7, 11.
 (quit,
 Laws are adapted for the major part :
 Some things were to be past by, there, with Art,
 To a more perfect Rule then to be squar'd,
 When Men God's Spir'it in larger measure shar'd,
 By which out of all Nati'ons God would draw
 A People subject to a purer Law.
Moses propounded, plainly, no Reward,
 Beyond what does this mortal State regard.
 Who then can question but there might have been
 A Law more perfect, than what that is seen,
 Which might eternal Bliss clearly propound,
 And this is in Christ's Instituti'on found.

Here by the way we this Remark may chuse, }
 With what Injustice the coeval Jews }
 Christ, tho obedient to their Law, did use : }
 He had been (*l*) circumcis'd, like them did eat,
 His (*m*) Habit too was Jewish, as his Meat ;
 He to their Priest sent (*n*) Lepers which he cleans'd,
 Nor with one of their (*o*) Festivals dispens'd ;
 The Paschal, and the rest observ'd with Zeal ;
 When he did any on the (*p*) Sabbath heal,

VIII.
 That *Moses*
 his Law was
 observ'd by Je-
 sus while he was
 on Earth ; nor
 were any Com-
 mandments after
 abolish'd, but
 what had no in-
 trinsic Goodness
 in them.

(*l*). Luke 2. 21. Gal. 4. 4. (*m*) Mat. 9. 20. (*n*) Mat. 8. 4. Mark 1. 44.
 Luke 5. 14. (*o*) Luke 2. 41. John 2. 13. 23. John 7. 8. (*p*) Mat. 12. 5.

Shew'd

Shew'd that their Law, and Commentators too,
 Allow'd Men on that day such works to do.
 (q) Acts 10. Some of their Laws, then (q) first declar'd repeal'd,
 Colof. 2. 14. After his Triumph over Death reveal'd:
 He being into th' inmost Heavens receiv'd,
 (r) Acts 2. 33. The (r) Holy Sp'rit adorn'd those that believ'd.
 36. And thus he his full Regal Pow'r maintain'd,
 Apoc. 1. 5. In which the Legislative is contain'd.
 James 1. 25. This (s) *Daniel* saw in his Prophetick view,
 (s) Dan. 7. Who, after *Syria*' and *Egypt's* Fate did shew,
 13, &c. (The last of which was while *Augustus* sway'd)
 That unto one all Pow'r should be convey'd,
 (t) Vid. Com- To whom, tho' in his outward habit (t) low,
 ment. Filius All Nations of the Earth should ever bow.
 hominis He- That part, besides, of the Mosaick Law,
 brais vilita- Th' obedience unto which *Christ* did withdraw;
 tem quamdam significat. Had nothing honest in it self alone,
 But things indiff'rent, mutable, thence known:
 If of themselves they necessary were,
 Would God but to one People them declare,
 And that not till two thousand years and more?
 While *Abel*, *Enoc*, *Noe*, who liv'd before;
Melchis'dech, *Abram*, *Isac*, *Jacob* too,
 And *Jeb*, all dear to God, none of this knew,
 Or what from nothing hardly was remov'd;
 Yet was their Faith never the less approv'd;
 Large were the marks that them th' Almighty
 (lov'd.)

Moses on *Jethro* did not urge those Rites:
 Nor *Jonah* on repenting *Ninivites*;
 Nor others, writing to the *Moabites*,
 To those of *Caldee*, *Egypt*, *Zidon*, *Tyre*,
 Any account concerning these require,
 When to a reck'ning all their Sins they call:
 These Precepts therefore were not general:

But

But either to keep off some Sin, design'd,
 To which the *Jews* were known the most inclin'd:
 Or else that People, so stiff-neck'd, to try,
 How far they'd with the Will of God comply;
 If not to typify some future things.
 And this no greater cause of wonder brings;
 Than if a King all Borough-Laws repeal,
 That one may flourish thro' the Commonweal.
 Nor any thing the face of Proof has gain'd,
 That God from changing has himself restrain'd:
 What tho he sometimes these perpetual call?
 The like does often human Laws befall,
 As different from temporary Laws,
 Made for a certain time, and transient cause.
 Yet what does hinder but new may be made,
 When publick benefit does so perswade?
 Thus God the *Jews* did variously command,
 When in the (u) Wilderness, and (w) holy Land: (u) Exod. 27.
 By Laws perpetual, those God therefore meant, (w) Deut. 12.1.
 Which were to stand till his reveal'd Intent.
 Which way of speaking all the Nations use,
 And should the less move wonder in the *Jews*,
 With whom, as such, that (x) right and service past, (x) Exo. 21.6.
 Which but from Jubilee to Jubilee did last: Levit. 25.10.
 Then the Messiah's Coming they agree
 To be the finishing great (y) Jubilee. (y) Esa. 61. 2.
 The Jewish Prophets too plainly foretold
 Of a new Cov'nant, promis'd long of old:
 And full of this does (z) *Jeremy* delight, } (z) Jer. 31.
 Where God does promise to (u) infuse the Light, } (a) Ib. v. 31.
 That none need farther groap in baleful Night;
 While Truth inscrib'd on ev'ry Breast appears:
 Besides a gen'ral Amnesty declares,
 Not much in this unlike a mortal King,
 If we such low Similitudes may bring:

Who

Of the Truth of

Who after a defection from his Pow'r,
 While Subjects one another would devour,
 The better to establish lasting Peace,
 Them from some loads of Imposit'ons frees ;
 And on a perfect Law lets them depend,
 Who for the future promise to amend.
 What is already offer'd may suffice ;
 Yet take their Law as in its parts it lies ;
 And 'twill appear that nothing there displac't,
 Could please God in it self, or always ought
 to last.

VIII.

As their Sacrifices, which of themselves never pleased God.

Their Sacrifices first themselves present, (vent:
 Which ev'n some *Jews* thought Men did first in-
 Them fond of various rites we plainly find,
 Whence against many Gods they are enjoind ;
 Perhaps but requisite, their minds to wean
 From what they had living in *Egypt* seen.
 When Sacrifice was, with their Offspring, come
 To take up in Religion too much room,
 As if 'twould in it's self th' Almighty please,
 And him, provok'd unto the height, appease,
 Without a Reformation in their Lives,
 Then it of Reputation God deprives :

Psalm 50.

Of this, he tells them, ' He makes no' account,
 ' How high soe're their Holocausts may mount,
 ' While Flocks and Herds they on each other
 ' heap,
 ' Bulls, &c Goats mingled with harmless Sheep,
 ' With these they would propitiate him in vain, }
 ' Since they but render back his own again, }
 ' 'Tis his what feeds on Mountain or on Plain : }
 ' No Beasts or Birds, says he, my notice see,
 ' And should I hunger, need I tell it thee ?
 ' Mine is the Universe with all things there :
 ' Dost think the Blood of Bulls or Goats my fare ?
 Offer

- ' Offer to God the Sacrifice of Praise,
 ' And pay those Vows which thy distresses raise.
 Some Jews, still to this ancient Rite inclin'd, }
 Think the Reproof not against that design'd ; }
 But th' ^{Old} ^{Law} ^{Man} ^{'s} pravity of Life and Mind :
 Yet who what here is cited well has weigh'd,
 Will find, that Victims on the Altars laid,
 As of themselves cannot th' Almighty please ;
 This in the Series of the Psalm one sees :
 For to the pious he directs the Speech ;
 Whom there he does after that manner teach ;
 That such are call'd together, there we find,
 Immed'ately hear, yea my People's joyn'd,
 After the Passage we above did quote ; (note.
 We may a (b)) diff'rent form to th'impious (b) Psal. 50. 16.
 In other places the like Sense is found ; *But unto the*
 ' What tho with Holocausts the Altar's crown'd, *wicked God*
 ' 'Tis not the Sacrifice that pleases thee, *saith, &c.*
 ' But th'Heart that's humbled its offence to see ; *Psalm 51.*
 ' For thou, O Lord ! dost not that Heart despise,
 ' Which broke and contrite at thy Footstool lies.
 . Elsewhere, ' The Sacrifice does not delight, *Psalm 40.*
 ' And the Burnt-off'ring's nothing in thy sight :
 ' Me thou hast mark'd for thine, nor dost require
 ' A warm Oblati'on with piac'lar Fire.
 ' Then said I, I am here to do thy Will,
 ' In which my own chief pleasure I fulfil :
 ' Not meerly as an hireling this I do,
 ' But to th'Impression on my Heart am true.
 ' My inward pleasure streams forth in my words ; }
 ' The transports of my Soul my Tongue records, }
 ' The Contemplation of thy Mercy this affords : }
 ' Thy Nature so veracious, and benigne ;
 ' I ev'ry where proclaim, as 'tis, divine,

- 'Thy Faithfulness and large Compassion shown,
 'I loudly in the Congregation own.
 Thus does our God, *Esaiah* represent ;
 Esa. 1. 11, &c. 'Why are so many Sacrifices spent ?
 'Your *Holocausts* of Rams have tyr'd me quite,
 'Nor do I in the richest Fats delight :
 'The Blood of *Bullocks*, Goats, or tender *Lambs*
 'Pleases no more, than do the toughest Rams :
 'Who bids you thus my sacred Courts profane ? }
 And *Jer'my* has a passage no less plain ;
 Nor does th'Interpreter the meaning strain. }
 Jer. 7. 21, &c. Thus says the God of Angels, *Israel's* Lord,
 'What tho ye heaps of *Holocaust* afford ?
 'Eat them your selves for all the good they bring.
 'Freeing your Fathers from th' *Egyptian* King,
 'Nothing of any Sacrifice I said ; }
 'This for the necessary Rule I laid,
 'That I should absolutely be obey'd ; }
 'So I their God, my People they should prove,
 'And they to take the Paths I shew, should love :
 'Thence all things should to their desires succeed. }
 Thus in the Prophet *Hose* we may read ;
 Hof. 6. 6. 'Beneficence does Sacrifice exceed ; }
 'Right thoughts of God before *Burnt-Off'rings*
 'pleas'd. }
 Thus where in *Micah* one the Question sees,
 Mich. 6. 6, 7. What God, displeas'd with us, may reconcile,
 Numbers of Rams, or measures of rich Oil ?
 God thus is represented there, 'I'll tell
 'What's truly good, and pleases me full well ;
 'That you to ev'ry one render his due,
 'And unto all Bowels of Mercy shew ;
 'While humbly before me your self you bear :
 Which places, if consider'd right, declare,

That

That these things of themselves, or i'th' first place,
As pleasing God we ought not to embrace.
But if the People by degrees were known,
As Superstition had upon them grown,
In them to place great part of Piety,
As if they flake the Wrath of the most High;
What wonder is't if God did them remove,
Indiff'rent in themselves, tho' ill they prove:
Thus when the Brazen Serpent *Moses* rais'd,
Men, as of Pow'r divine devoutly prais'd;
Good *Hezekiah* cast it to the ground.

And among them some Prophecies are found,
Fore-telling that these Rites should one day cease:
This from their Law we may collect with ease,
Where only *Aaron's* Race a Pow'r receive

For off'ring these, and while at home they live.

But then a (c) King is promis'd far to reign,

'Who should from *Sion* lead his humble Train;

'And both a Priest and King always remain,

'Resembling what *Melchisedec* was known.

And in *Esaiah's* Prophecy 'tis shown;

'That Men in (d) *Egypt* should an Altar view,

'Where the *Egyptians*, and *Assyrians* too,

'Should joyn in Worship with the happy Jew.

Again, (e) *They whom vast distances divide,*

'Who have no common Language for their Guide,

'Shall with the *Israelites* their Off'rings bring,

'As Priests and Levites to th' eternal King.

This could not be till their Law were repeal'd.

Besides, in (f) *Malachi* it is reveal'd,

'That God the Off'rings of the Jews did hate;

'That East and West his Name should celebrate,

'And Clouds of Incense should perfume the Skies,

'As from pure hands it to his Throne did rise:

(c) Psal. 110.

(d) Esa. 19.

19, 23.

Ver. 25.

(e) Esa. 66.

20, 21.

(f) Mal. 1. 10, 11.

Dan. 9. 27.

Dani'el relating th'Angel *Gabriel's* words,
 This Oracle concerning Christ, records :
The Sacrifice and Off'ring he removes.
 And God by Instances moſt real proves,
 That all th'Oblations *Moses* had enjoyn'd,
 Cannot with him any acceptance find ;
 When more than ſixteen hundred Years are gone,
 Since Jews have had no Temple of their own ;
 No Altar, or diſtinction of their Tribes,
 That they may know to offer, as their Law
 preſcribes.

IX.

The difference
 of Meats.

Their Law forbidding Meats of ſev'ral kinds,
 No better grounds for its continuance finds :

For it is evident after the Flood,
 No ſort of Meat under Injuncti'on ſtood :
Noah, and his, had the free uſe of all,
 Which as a Right unlimited did fall
 To *Abram*, *Iſaac*, *Jacob*, ſprang from *Sem*,
 As well as unto *Japhet*, and bold *Cham* :
 But when th'*Egyptian* Superſtition ſpread
 O're *Iſrael's* Seed, thither to Bondage led,
 Th'eating ſome Animals was then deny'd,
 As thence were the *Egyptian* Rites ſupply'd,
 And thence they thought things future were
 deſcry'd :

Or elſe their Law, with Types and Shadows dark,
 Did by ſome Ani'mals certain Vices mark :
 That this was not a gen'ral Rule deſign'd,
 We in the inſtance of thoſe Beaſts may find,

Deut. 14. 21. Which free from outward force their Breath
 reſign'd :

Of theſe unlawful 'twas for *Jews* to eat,
 Which for Inhabitants was licenc'd Meat ;
 Such too, who met with this Indulgence, were,
 As God himſelf commended to their care :

Nay,

Nay, the old Jewish Rabbies did maintain,
That when *Messiah* should begin his Reign,
He should this Prohibition quite remove ; (prove.
And Swines Flesh should as clean as Bullocks
And surely since it pleas'd the Pow'r Divine,
People of ev'ry Land in one to joyn ;
A liberty in these, beyond dispute ;
More than restraint, must such Communion suit.

Let us consider next their Holy Days :
They first were kept in the Almighty's praise,
For their deliverance from th' *Egypti'an* hand,
And leading to the promis'd Sacred Land :
But *Jeremy* a time to come did shew,
When new, and greater benefits t'ensue,
Should so the memory of this surpass,
That Men should hardly menti'on that it was :
Besides, as 'twas with Off'rings, so with these ;
'Twas thought they God so in themselves did
 please,
That keeping them they might indulge their
 Ease :

X.
And of Days.

Jer. 16. 14.

Thence representing God, *Esaiah* says,
I hate all your New Moons and Holy Days,
They're such a burden as I cannot bear.

Isa. 1. 14.

Most confident they of the Sabbath are :
They urge that Precept always ought to bind ;
That 'twas in Paradise *Adam* enjoyn'd :
To which I say, with Rabbies on my side,
The Precepts teaching this we thus divide ;
One is, that we the Memory preserve ;
Th'other, the day religiously observe :
The first of these is to this day obey'd,
In grateful owning how the World was made :

Of the Truth of

Th'other requires from all those Works t'abstain,
 Which on the common days full licence gain :
 The first the Pious kept before the Law,
 Obeying this, Men, *Enoch, Noah, Law,*
 This *Abram, Isa'ac, Jacob,* kept in Mind,
 Whose Travels we at large recorded find ;
 With them this is not found a day of Rest,
 As after leaving *Egypt* 'tis exprest ;
 From that and the strange progress thro the Sea,
 We th'Institution of the Sabbath see ; (sung,
 On (a) the first day their Thanks to God they
 And from that time the sacred Rest begun.
 The first observance which is enter'd found,

(a) viz. Of
 their Progress.

(b) Ex. 16. 25. Was, (b) when they heavenly Food took from
 the Ground ;

(c) Exod. 13. 8. And (c) their deliv'rance from th' *Egyptian* Land,
 Is mention'd as the cause of this Command :
 Care of those Servants too this Law exprest,
 Whose cruel Masters would allow no rest,
 Who sojourn'd there were to it likewise bound,
 That the same face of Quiet might go round,
 That this does not take other Nations in,
 May be from hence most evidently seen,
 That we in many places find it nam'd,

(d) Exod. 13. 9. A (d) *Sign, a Covenant,* God with *Isra'el* fram'd :
 But that those Laws which did their Sanction
 gain,

In mem'ry of be'ing freed from *Egypt's* Chain,
 Were not intended ever to remain ;
 Appears i'th' Promise we observ'd before,
 Of greater benefits preserv'd in store.
 Add to this farther, If Sabbatick Rest,
 As indispensable, at first were prest ;
 All interfering Laws could not but fail ;
 When against this some Jewish Laws prevail.

Thus

Thus Circumcision on the Sabbath's good :
 Beasts then were offer'd while their Temple stood ;
 It's mutability their Doctors preach,
 Who working on the Sabbath lawful teach,
 If authoriz'd by any Prophet's Speech. }
Joshu'ab's Command for taking *Ferico*,
 They urge as what does such Commission show :
 But that in the *Messiah's* promis'd Reign,
 There should no differences of days remain ;
 Some, from that passage in *Isaiah*, hold,
 Where 'tis concerning that blest time foretold, *Isa. 66. 23.*
 ' That God's true Worship should be constant
 known,
 ' From Sabbath unto Sabbath, and from Moon
 to Moon.

Let's come to Circumcision long in use, .
 Before that Law which *Moses* gave the Jews ;
 To *Abram* and his Seed this was enjoyn'd ;
 Yet this th'incepti'on of that Law we find ;
 Thus God to *Abräham* ; ' You and your Seed,
 ' Unto the Land of Cana'an shall succeed ;
 ' That Land where now a Pilgrim's Life you lead :
 ' See that my Cov'nant you observe with care :
 ' This is the Cov'nant I with you declare,
 ' You and the Males which from your Loins descend,
 ' Shall all be circumcis'd unto the end.
 Before we shew'd that i'th'old Cov'nants room
 A new one, common unto all, should come,
 And this distinctive mark then needs must cease :
 Besides some Myl'try in this Rite one sees ;
 And this their Prophets shew when they impart,
 Precepts for Circumcisi'on of the Heart ;
 Which is in all our Saviour's Rules descry'd :
 Besides the Promises to that apply'd,

XI.
 And outward
 Circumcision.

Of the Truth of

Must needs be thought intended to relate
 Unto the prospect of a better State,
 Eternal Life, which Jesus shews us clear,
 Till when it did only in Types appear.
 That Promise too which did to *Abram* fall,
 That many Nations him should Father call,
 Seems to describe that happy time, design'd,
 When all the World should in one Faith be }
 joyn'd,
 Which, to express the Gospel-state we find,
 No wonder that the Shadows flee away,
 At the desir'd approach of perfect Day;
 That to this sign God did not stint his Grace,
 Appears, in that his Favour did embrace
Abram, and many who before him liv'd,
 Before this Mark was in their Flesh receiv'd.
 And while the Jews through the parch'd Desart
 It was omitted without any blame. (came,

XII. Much they to Christ and his Apostles owe,
And yet Jesus Who their discharge from this encumbrance show.
and his Apostles And this evinc'd by Gifts and Deeds so high,
tolerated these. As nothing short of *Moses* we descry.
 Yet they who taught the Rule which we admire,
 Did not their owning this great Boon require:
 But in such things indulg'd them their own
 way,
 So they on others did not th'Imposition lay:
 This shews they without cause from Christ with-
 draw,
 Upon pretence of their old Ritu'al Law.
 The almost sole Objection they have brought,
 Against the Miracles our Saviour wrought,
 Being thus remov'd, let's other Mediums chuse,
 Proper for the Conviction of the Jews.

In

the Christian Religion.

105

In this Profession Jews and we unite,
That Men endu'd with the Prophetick Light,
Did the clear notice of One promis'd bring,
From whom much greater good to them should
spring,

Then e're before from Heav'n did Men besal ;
HIM, the *Messias* all agree to call.
We, that he has been here already, say ;
They, yet expect him in a future day.
Let's search those Books, fairly this Doubt to end,
Which for Divine both sides alike commend.

(a) *Ezekiel* shews *Daniel* to be believ'd :
He would not cheat, nor could hav' bin deceiv'd
In what from *Gabr'el* he affirms receiv'd.
He (b) from the Angel's dictating declares,
That there should not elapse five hundred years,
After the Ediſt publish'd to restore
That City, where the *Jews* all met t' adore ;
But the *Messias* should on Earth be seen ;
When now above two thousand there have been ;
And yet the *Jews* expect him still to come ;
Nor can they name another in his room,
To whom this circumstance of Time agrees,
And this their Rabby *Nehumias* sees,
Who fifty years e're the *Messias's* Reign,
Say's, more than fifty years can't now to that
remain.

Another Note we touch'd upon before,
Of having Pow'r from God all Nations o're ;
When the *Seleucan* with the *Lagian* Line
Should all Authority, of Force, resign :
The last in *Cleopatra* did expire,
Little before the World did *Christ* admire.

XIII.
*A Proof against
the Jews from
their confessing
that at eximious
Messias was
promis'd.*

XIV.
*'Tis shewn that
he is already
come, from the
presignification of
the time.*
(a) *Ezek. 14.*
14. & 28. 3.
(b) *Dan. 9.25.*

*Ptolemy the
Son of Lagus.*

In

Of the Truth of

Dan. 9.

In *Daniel* a third Note deserves regard,
Where, from Prophetick Spirit, 'tis declar'd,
That after the *Messias* here enjoy'd,
Jerusalem should wholly be destroy'd;

Haggai 2. 2.

Zerubbabel.

And this *Josephus* to his Age applies,
A Passage of like sense in *Haggai* lies;
Their *Governour*, with the High-Priest, we find,
After a great dejection shew'n of mind,
Seeing the Temple then but lately rais'd,
If with the first compar'd, not to be prais'd,
Had hence their drooping hearts with spir'ts sup-
ply'd,

*Such honour this shall crown, as was the first de-
ny'd.*

Of Size, Materials, Art, or Ornament,
'Tis plain by Story this could not be meant.

Besides, the greatest Hebrew Rabbies hold,

The later was infer'our to the old,

Both for the Majesty, and Light Divine,

Effusion too, which with the first did shine.

Wherein the last should yet the first exceed,

We may of Sacred Revelation read;

Where God declares his Peace with That should
By which his Grace and Favour is express'd. (rest,

Mal. 3. 1.

This we in *Malachy* at large may find;

'*Who comes to seal my Cov'nant with Mankind*

'*I send before: The way he shall prepare,*

'*And in the Temple suddenly appear,*

'*Whom you expect to come, your Hearts delight.*

Under the second Temple he did write.

'Tis clear then, while the second Temple stood,

The Jews were to expect this promis'd Good,

Which from *Zerubb'el* to *Vespasian's* under-
stood;

For

For 'twas not wholly from its Ruine rais'd,
While *Herod*, they who valu'd Grandeur, prais'd,
By sev'ral parts they did compleat the pile,
Which the same Temple we may justly stile.
'Tis plain they then did for *Messiah* look,
From whence, some blindly *Herod* for him took.
Some, others; some; *Judas the Galileite*,
When *Jesús* liv'd who needs must be the right.

Some Jews perceiving how these Motives press,
That the appointed time is past, confess.
But think their Sins of it th'occasion were:
To wave how positive their Prophets are,
Without Condition tacitely imply'd;
How could the Advent be for these deny'd?

When *Daniël* from a sacred impulse spake,
That Ruine should for these *Jerusalem* o're-
take,

Soon after the *Messiah's* peaceful Reign:

Besides another cause of's Advent's plain,

To be the Healing a corrupted Age,

And Men t'a better Rule of Life t'engage;

While for the past he did God's Wrath assuage.

In *Zach'ry* see a sacred Promise lie, (supply; *Zach. 12. 10,*

That God with Grace would *David's House* & *13. 1.*

From thence an open Fountain should appear,

Which from their Sins *Jerusalem* should clear.

The Jews besides a strong Tradition own,

That *Ischopher Messiah* should be known;

That is design'd th'Almighty to appease;

But could he be with-held for that Disease,

Which 'tis most evident he was to ease?

XV.

With an Answer
to what is said,
of his coming be-
ing delay'd for
the Sins of the
People.

XVI.

Also from the
present state of
the Jews compa-
red with what
God's the law promises.

That the *Messiah's* come, we may evince
From a by-no-means disputable Sense:

God's

Of the Truth of

God's Cov'nant with them in their Law ex- }
 Declares they shall in *Palestine* be blest, (prest, }
 While they obed'ient to those Precepts rest :
 But when from these they a Defection make,
 Exile and other Woes should them o're-take :
 But when a lively Sense of their Misdeeds,
 Sincere Compunction and Contrition breeds ;
 How much soever distant they remain,
 They all should see the Holy Land again.
 More now are past than fifteen hundred Years,
 And no Completion yet of this appears :
 Still they in Exile without Temple live :
 Often they to rebuild it vainly strive.
 Wond'rous Erupti'ons of resistless Fire,
 Have forc'd the baffled Work-men to retire,
 This *Ammianus Marcellinus* shows,
 Tho he did Christianity oppose.
 When formerly that Peoples Sins encreast ;
 When with their Children they did *Saturn* feast ;
 When for no Crime Adultery did pass,
 To rob Widows and Orphans usu'al was,
 And to fill up the measure of their Guilt,
 Innocent Blood was without Mercy spilt ;
 For these against them Prophets oft complain'd,
 And Exile they, for Punishment, sustain'd ;
 Yet seventy Years, of this was th'utmost date,
 And God compass'onating their low Estate,
 Did by his Prophets keep their Spirits up,
 And tell when he'd remove that bitter Cup.
 But since they last were driven from their Land,
 They seem kept out by an Almighty Hand,
 Banish'd, contemn'd, their Prophecies all ceast, }
 And no fixt time for their return exprest ; }
 Their Rabbies with Delusion seem possess, }

To

To Fables and ridic'ulous Doctrines fall,
Which they their Oral Law sottishly call ;
These like blind Insects in their Talmud crawl. }
Sometimes they're equall'd, and sometimes
prefer'd,

To what their Lawgiver from God declar'd.
There they the Godhead represent t'have wept,
To see *Jerusalem's* mighty Ruins heap'd ;
Of *Beh'moth* and *Leviathan* maintain
Things so absurd, as to repeat were pain :
Yet all this while they the true God have serv'd,
And to the Worship of no false one swerv'd :
None do their Slaughters or Adulteries blame,
And a warm Zeal does their griev'd Hearts inflame.
They fast and pray, an angry God t'appease,
And yet without Remorse he hears and sees :
None of their Propiti'ations can prevail :
Which shews that the Mosaick Law does fail :
Or else some Sin their Nation has involv'd,
Through such a Tract of Ages unabsolv'd.
It lies on them, either the Sin to name,
Or own 'twas slighting the *Messiah*, when
he came.

That the *Messiah's* come already's plain ;
That *Jesus* was the true, we here maintain.
Of all that e're with that Pretence arose ;
Or else, with whom, for such, People did close ;
Not one of them has left a Sect behind,
By which what they deliver'd we may find.
Nor *Herod*, *Judas*, or *Barchoshebas*,
Who for the Christ with learned Men did pass,
When *Adrian* did the Roman Empire sway :
But down from *Jesus*, to this very day

XVII.

'Tis prov'd
that *Jesus* is the
Messias from the
things foretold
of the *Messias*.

There

There have been, and throughout the World remain,

Those who this *Jesus* for the *Christ* maintain.

And many other signs I here might give,

Which were fortold, or People did receive,

Which as fulfill'd in *Jesus* we believe.

(g) Psal. 89.4. As that he was from (g) *David's* Seed to spring:

Isa. 11. 10. That Him a (h) *Virgin* to the World should bring;

Jer. 23. 5. He who betroth'd her this (i) from Heav'n was

Mat. 1. 1, &c. taught,

(b) Isa. 7. 14. Or else the Nuptial Tie would not have sought:

Mat. 1. 18.

(i) Mat. 1.20. In (k) *Beth'lem* he was born; and (l) *Galilee*

(k) Mic. 5. 2. Did the first spreading of his Doctrine see.

Mat. 2. 1. To every Mala'dy he did Cure afford,

(l) Isa. 9. 1, 2, 9. (m) Sight to the Blind, Feet to the Lame restor'd;

Mat. 4. 12, 13.

(m) Is. 35. 5, 6. But on one Sign alone I might rely,

Mat. 11. 5, &c. Th'effect of which we at this day descry,

(n) Psal. 2. 8. (n) *David*, (o) *Isaiah*, (p) *Zach'ry*, (q) *Hose* too,

& 72. 8; 17.

(o) Isa. 2. 2. Do in plain Prophecies expressly shew,

& 49. 6. & 55.

That *Christ* should not instruct the *Jews* alone,

4. 5, &c.

(p) Zach. 2. 11. The Worship of false Gods, through him should

& 8. 20, &c.

(q) Hos. 2. 23. fail,

And over far-spread Multitudes, the True prevail.

Until he came false Worships did abound;

Thence forward by degrees they all lost ground;

And in the Worship of One God were drown'd.

To *Jesus* and his Follow'rs this we owe:

No such effect from *Jewish* Doctors know.

(r) Hos. 2. 23. The People thence who were not (r) God's,

became

Such, as for his, he with delight does name.

(s) Gen. 49. 1. This, the fulfilling *Jacob's* (s) Blessing shows;

(t) Vers. 9. That Civil Pow'r (t) fierce *Judah* should not

lose,

Till

the Christian Religion.

III

Till (u) *Shilo* came, whom Nati^ons should obey : (u) Verſ. 10.
That this is the *Messiah* Jewish Doctors ſay.

The hard'ned Jews here an Objection feign,
That many things ſtill unfulfill'd remain,
Belonging to the true *Messiah's* Reign.
But thoſe things at the beſt are but obſcure,
And may as well another Senſe endure :

XVIII.
*An Answer to
this, that ſome
things are ſaid
not to be fulfill'd.*

For theſe, we ought not Evidence to leave,
Such as ſhines forth in that which we believe ;
The Holineſs of what this *Jeſus* taught ;
The excellent Reward to Light he brought ;
All things exhibited in Speech moſt clear ;
By Miracles his Miſſion made appear.

To prove his Doctrine true theſe ſhould ſuffice :

But then for underſtanding Prophecies,

Which to ſeal'd Books we often find compar'd ;

Iſa. 29. 11.

Men with ſome helps from God ſhould be
prepar'd,

Dan. 12. 4, 9.

Of which who ſlight things plain, are juſtly
bar'd.

They know beſides, that what makes their de-
Is often render'd in a diff'rent Senſe : (ſence,

If they make ſearch with an impari'al Mind,

They ev'n their own Interpreters will find,

Who during their Captiv'ity had wrote,

Or much about the time that *Jeſus* taught,

In theſe agreeing with what Chriſtians thought :

If one obſerve how later theſe oppoſe,

Writing ſince Hatred againſt *Jeſus* roſe ;

This a plain Biſs to their party ſhows.

Ev'n they themſelves will without ſcruple own,

That Figures oft in Holy Writ are known,

The proper Senſe being diff'rent from the True,

Which we in num'rous Inſtances may view :

Thus

Of the Truth of

Thus God is mention'd coming from the Skies,
And oft describ'd with Mouth, Ears, Nose, and
Eyes.

Why should we not in the like way explain,
Some things foretold of the *Messiah's* Reign ?
As that the Wolf and Lamb, Leopard and Kid,
Lion and Fatling, in one Covert hid,
Should lie together in a peaceful way ?
That suckling Infants should with Serpents play ?
God's Mountain should above all others rise,
Thither should Strangers come to sacrifice ?
Either the follow'ing or preceding words,
Where holy Penman, what's foretold, records,
Oft prove Condition in the Sense imply'd :
Some Promises are thence the Jews deny'd,
Because they have not with the *Christ* comply'd.
Our Faith on this account they should not blame;
Since for the failure they must take the shame.
Some Promises we find without reserve ;
If such they unaccomplish'd still observe,
What prejudice that yet their time's not past ?
They hold *Messiah's* Reign till all things end
(shall last.

Self. XIX. *Jesus* his low Estate gives some Offence ;
Answer to the But the Objection is a vain pretence :
Objection from Almost throughout the Holy Writ 'tis seen,
the low Estate, God will debase the Proud, exalt the Mean.
and Death of
Jesus. *Jacob* past *Jordan* with his Staff alone,
But to return with Flocks and Herds was known.
Moses, a banish'd Shepherd, hardly far'd,
When in the burning Bush our God appear'd,
And him the Leader of his Flock declar'd.
David from Sheep, was to a Kingdom chose,
Many such Instances the Scripture shows.

We

We find it read of this long-promis'd King,
 That he glad-Tidings to the Poor should bring :
 That he should not in publick make a Noise,
 Nor use Reproaches, but a gentle Voice : (heat,
 Would cherish the bruis'd Reed, and that small
 Which in a snuff maintains a doubtful seat.
 His Death, and other Ills which he did bear,
 Should not his Credit in the least impair.
 God often in his wise Dispose thinks fit
 The Imp'ious in their Ravage to permit,
 And force the Pious poorly to submit. }
 The Sodomites with lustful Fury hot,
 Made a poor Fugitive of right'ous Lot.
 Some have been slain, *Abel* by Parricide,
Isaiah is by piece-meals said t've di'd.
 The *Maccabees* in Tortures did expire,
 The Mother, with the Sons of her desire.
 Many such Instances we here might bring ;
 'Tis written in those Psalms which th *Hebrews*
Thy Servants Carcases a Prey did yeild (sing;
Unto the Birds o'th' Air, Beasts of the Field: Psalm 79. 2, 3.
Their Blood like Water in the Streets does flow,
And none dare give the Burial which they owe.
 That the *Messias* was his Pow'r to gain, }
 Thro' many Troubles, and Death full of Pain,
 Is from *Isaiah* beyond questi'on plain. } Isa. 53. 1.
 ' Who has what we report duly receiv'd ?
 ' Who has the Pow'r of the most High believ'd ?
 ' And that the rather, since before his Eye
 ' He grows up like a Plant wanting supply ;
 ' A starv'ling Root plac'd in a Sandy Ground,
 ' No Form or Comeliness in him is found ;
 ' Nor if you see him, can you Beauty find,
 ' Which thro' the Eye should work upon the Mind.

Of the Truth of

' Of Men rejected, and expos'd to scorn ;
 ' And many are the Sorrows by him born.
 ' Those who insult not, will their Faces hide ;
 ' These exercise their Pity, others Pride :
 ' Yet he our Griefs does surely for us bear ;
 ' Our's the Advantage, his the Sorrows are,
 ' In his wounds our Transgressions are descri'd,
 ' And our Iniquities have bruise'd his side.
 ' His Chastisement procures our settled Peace,
 ' And we are heal'd in what gives him Disease ;
 ' We all, like silly Sheep, have gone astray, }
 ' And each run bleating his own foolish way : }
 ' For all our Aberrations he does pay.
 ' Silent he bears Afflictions beyond thought,
 ' And like a Lamb is to the Slaughter brought ;
 ' Or as a Sheep, before her Slicers dumb,
 ' So does he to the bitter'st Suff'rings come.
 ' After a Pris'n and shameful Sentence past,
 ' With form of Law he's taken off at last.
 ' Yet after all, who's worthy to declare
 ' That life of Glory falling to his share ?
 ' My Peoples Sins occasion'd his remove ;
 ' Thence 'twas he went so soon to's place above.
 ' The wicked ins'olent with the Pow'r they have,
 ' Drive him to Death and the devouring Grave :
 ' Altho he never did commit a Wrong,
 ' Or e're impos'd with a deceitful Tongue,
 ' But tho God suffer'd all this to be done,
 ' Since he refus'd not for our Sins t'atone,
 ' But did himself a Victim for us pay ;
 ' His Seed, his Life, shall never know decay ;
 ' And thro' all Ages he our God shall please ;
 ' After his Travel he shall sit at ease,
 ' With Joys the most sincere for ever crown'd,
 ' While numbers thro' him justifi'd are found.
 ' And

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- ‘ And he discharg’d the Debt which on them lay,
- ‘ Him with the price of Victory Ple pay ;
- ‘ Because he did himself to Death resign,
- ‘ As a Transgressor suffer’d Wrath Divine.
- ‘ For others Sins he did endure the pain,
- ‘ For them an Intercessor does remain.

What other Prince or Prophet can they shew,
 To whom his Character may be thought due ?
 What some of the late Jewish Writers feign,
 As if ’twere of their Nation means, is vain.
 As if they, scatter’d over every Land,
 Should many bring the Truth to understand,
 By their Example, and diffusive Speech,
 The contrary to which the Scriptures teach :
 Shewing that they have suffer’d nothing ill ;
 But for their Sins they worse should suffer still.
 The Series too of what’s deliver’d here
 Will not endure such a strain’d Sense to bear :
 The Prophet, rather God, does there declare,
My Peoples Sins of this th’ occasion are :
 God’s ; or *Isaiah’s* People, were the Jews :
 This then, That ’twas another suffer’d, shews.
 Their ancient Jewish Rabbies have confess’d
 These things of the *Messiah* were express’d :
 With which some of the later being prest,
 Upon the Ficti’on of two Christs do fall ;
 One they indeed the Son of *Joseph* call,
 Who was to suffer Ills and Death at last ;
 Another for the Son of *David* past ;
 All things with him should happily succeed :
 This from parti’ality must needs proceed.
 ’Tis easier, and does better far agree
 With what we in Prophetick Writings see ;

Of the Truth of

T'acknowledge one who was to gain his Pow'r,
 By Life of pain, and shame at the last hour;
 Which we believe of *Jesus* to be true:
 If we were silent, This, the thing it self
 should shew.

XX.
*And as if they
 were good Men,
 who prosecuted
 him to death.*

Some *Jesus* and his Doctrine disbeliev'd,
 On an Opinion they had preconceiv'd,
 That they who did first Opposition raise,
 Were Men for Probity deserving Praise;
 Chiefly the Priests who warmli est did proceed,
 Here I, for Satyr, no Invention need. (read,
 Let them but their own Law and Prophets
 There does in lively Characters appear,
 What sort of Men their Predecessors were;
 As Men uncircumcis'd of Heart and Ear,
 That with Lip-service they to God draw nigh,
 With Hearts which in Earth's furthest Corners lie.
 Their Predecessors would have *Joseph* slain,
 Slav'ry was all the mitigation he could gain.
 Of them they were whose Factions *Moses* tir'd,
 So much that he to end his Life desir'd,
 Whose Rod the Earth and Air were known
 t'obey,
 At one dread shake the astonish'd Sea made way;
 The Sea less deaf, and less disturb'd than they.
 These were not satisfy'd with heav'nly Bread;
 Belching up Quails still wanted to be fed.
 Such leaving *David* their Anointed King,
 To his Rebellious Son their Homage bring.
 They *Zacharias* at the Altar slew, (view,
 The Victim of their Cruelty, the Priest did
 Nor were their Priests less scandalously ill;
 They by false Witness *Jeremy* would kill.

Lay-

Lay-Piety indeed came in to's aid ;
 Yet him their Influence a Captive made,
 Until themselves were forc'd to the like fate.
 Is't said, while Jesus blest this Earthly State,
 The Priests then living greater conscience made ?
 This fond Belief *Josephus* will disallow :
 Read there, how great their Crimes, how strange
 their Woes :

That these were short of their Demerits he
 avows.

Nor can the *Sanhedrim* be better thought,
 Since, as by th'History of those times we're
 taught,
 Not choice, but great Men's Pow'r to th'Office
 brought.

Often who gave the most, promoted were,
 Before for Life, then but from Year to Year.
 What wonder then if People swell'd with Pride,
 With Av'rice or Ambition for their guide,
 Should be with an insatiate Fury mov'd,
 At one whose holy Life theirs so reprov'd ?
 Against him they could no Objection raise,
 But what they always met who merited most
 Praise.

The Prophet *Micah* thus to Prison was brought,
 For standing to the Truth which God had taught,
 Against four hundred of a diff'rent thought.
Ahab against *Elias* that did urge, (purge,
 From which the Priests put Christ himself to
 That he was the disturber of that Rest,
 Of which till then *Israel* had been possessor
 Did Christ against the Jewish Temple preach ?
 For this they did condemn their *Jeremy's* Speech.
 Add farther, as their ancient *Rabbies* say,
 Men shall be known in the *Messiah's* day,

As bold as Dogs, as stubborn as the Aſs,
 The Cruelty of Beasts far to surpass,
 And God himself who plainly did foresee,
 What in *Messiah's* time the Jews would be,
 Says a new People he for his will chuse:
 While from the Streets and Cities of the Jews,
 Scarce one or two ascend the holy Mount,
 But he with Gentiles would fill up th' account.
 Isa. 8. 14. A Stone of stumbling, an offensive Rock,
 Shall Christ become to *Isra'ls* scatter'd Flock,
 Psal. 118. 22. But yet that Stone which the skill Builders leave,
 Others shall into the chief place receive.

XXI.
 Answer to the
 Objection, that
 many Gods are
 worshipp'd by
 Christians.

Two Calumnies do yet untouch'd remain,
 With which the Jews Christi'anity would
 stain,
 First, That we worship many Gods they feign.
 But here with malice obvi'ous to discern,
 A Doctrine opposite to their's they turn.
 Th'Objection equally affects the Jew,
 As does their *Philo* evidently shew.
 He three *Hypostases* in God does name,
 Unto him adds his *Word* which made this frame;
 Who otherwise than Men from's Father came;
 On the belief he of a Third does fall,
 Him does Embassador, or Angel call,
 To whom he does assign the care of all.
Adofes, *Nehmanni's* Son, with him agrees;
 And in their *Cabalists* the like one sees.
 They God distinguish as a threefold Light;
 Some have the Names of which the Christi'ans
 write:
 The *Father*, *Son*, or *Word*, and *Spirit Divine*.
 Here what's confest by all the Jews to joyn;

That

That Spirit known the Prophets to inspire,
 They do as something increate, admire,
 Distinguish'd still from him by whom 'twas sent :
 And so of what by *Schechina* is meant.
 That Force Divine should in the *Christ* reside,
 Which they call Wisdom, many Jews confide :
 Whence the Chaldean Par'aphrast does accord
 With *Christians*, calling him th' Almighty's Word.
David *Isaiah*, with more, taught of Heav'n,
 The Name of *God* and *Lord*, to him have giv'n.

Another Imputation here they lay,
 That we to a meer Creature Worship pay :
 But this with mighty ease is wip'd away ;
 Since we to *Christ*, no other Honour give,
 Than what we in the *Psalms* his due perceive.
 The second, *David Kimchi* thus applies ;
 Finding King *David* not so high to rise,
 In *Christ* the Character at large describes :
 Yet none did more than he *Christ*'anity op-
 pose.

XXII.
 And that the
 Humane Nature
 is ador'd.

Psalms 2.

Psalms 110.

The hundred and tenth *Psalms* which this yet
 fuller shows ;

Must needs be thought of the *Messiah* meant.
 That which some Jews of later time invent
 Of *David*, and of *Hezekiah* some,
 Is but their Malice boyling up in scum.
 The *Psalms* is *David's*, as th' Inscripti'on shews ;
 Where then King *David* calling, *Lord*, one views ;
 Can it be thought, this to himself he'd use ?
 Or *Hezekiah* coming from his Line,
 When yet he did in nothing him out-shine ?

Abr'am no Priestly Character posselt,
 And him *Melchisedec* devoutly blest,
 As one whom a more sacred Order did invest.

Gen.

Of the Truth of

Psal. 110. 2.

That which we added by the *Psalmist* know,
'A Rod of Strength shall out of Sion go,
'And make his distant Foes his Prowess see,
 Does evidently with the *Christ* agree.
 Nor did the ancient Jews e're differ here,
 And this in their old Paraphraſts is clear.
 So great their Probity was fully known,
 Who for the *Christ*, the *Nazareite*, did own,
 That we for this might credit them alone;
 As well as *Moses* is by Jews believ'd,

In what himself alone declares from God
 receiv'd.

But more, and stranger Arguments, maintain,
 That Pow'r Supream this *Jesus* did obtain;
 That many saw him come to Life again:
 That he was seen when to the Heav'ns he past:
 That out of Men he raging Demons cast:
 Diseases cur'd by his tremendous Name: (came,
 And that the Gift of Tongues t'his Follow'ers
 Which he had promis'd for his Empire's sign;
 His Scepter too, that is, his Word Divine,
 From *Sion* went devoid of Humane Aid,
 And did the Limits of the Earth invade,
 People, and Kings, its sacred force obey'd:
 Exactly answering what the Psalmist told.
 Their *Cabalists* a middle Nature hold,
 Between the *Highest*, and the Humane Mind;
 For whom the name of *Enoch's* Son they find;
 With a much lower Pow'r to him assign'd.
 To him how much more justly this we yeild,
 Who has himself with so much Light reveal'd?
 Against the *Father's* Pow'r, this does not make;
 Since we confess he this from him did take:

1 Cor. 15. 24.

To him at th'end of all it must return;
 And we his Honour brightned hence discern

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Unto more subtle Questions to descend,
Were but the Readers time in waste to spend ;
These things I think may be enough to prove,
That no Objection any Skill can move,
Argues the Doctrines which this *Jesus* taught,
Either absurd, or impious to be thought.
What hinders then, but all Men should imbrace
Those Doctrines, which such Miracles did grace,
Which Precepts of such Sanctity commend,
With a Reward so glorious in the end ?
Whoever this for his Live's Rule does take,
But Questi'ons more particular would make ;
Must search those sacred Books, which we
maintain,
The whole of our Religi'on to contain,
That on Mens Minds these their due force may
gain.
We ought with fervent Zeal that God t'im-
plore,
Whom Jews, and we, with holy Fear adore ;
That he to them would open the clos'd Door ;
That they may feel the beams of Light Divine,
In their most inward Parts serenely shine :
That that warm Pray'r may efficac'ious prove,
Utter'd for them by *Christ* when he did hence
remove.

XXIII.
*A Conclusion of
this part, with a
Prayer for the
Jews,*

L I B.

Of the Truth of

And after mutu'al various chances past,
 They struck an undivided League at last.
 Then, a Conformity of Manners, brought
 The *Turks* to close with what the others taught :
 Friendship prevail'd where Force did fruitless
 prove,

So much more pow'rful is the bond of Love ;
 Of Empire with the *Turks* remain'd the Seat,
 Taking in Partners, they became more great :
 Cities of *Asia*, and renowned *Greece*,
 They soon compell'd to render up their Keys ;
 Their prosp'rous Arms in *Hungary* were crown'd,
 And they broke through the stubborn *German*
 Bound.

II.

The Foundation
 of Mahometism,
 concerning not
 enquiring into
 Religion, over-
 thrown.

This Doctrine, set up to encourage Fights,
 Is glaringly drest out with gaudy Rites ;
 Their Books, call'd Holy, from the vulgar hid,
 All free enquiry after Truth forbid :
 Nothing more justly may Suspiti'on breed,
 Than that they are prohibited to read :
 Who would not think that an adult'rate Ware,
 For which who puts it off takes mighty care,
 That none shall view the purchase he has made,
 This being the conditi'on of the Trade ?
 All Men indeed can't equally be brought
 To understand all Objects of their thought ;
 Pride, Affectati'on, Custom, may misguide ;
 But that the way of Truth should be deny'd
 To them who seek it without by-respect,
 Themselves and all things else to God subject,
 With this the Aid Divine warmly implore ;
 Would cloud the Goodness of Him we adore.
 And since a judging Pow'r adorns the Mind,
 What of that Pow'r can we more worthy find,

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But that those things should exercise it most,
Through Ignorance of which Eternal Life is
lost ?

Moses so pow'rful with his wondrous Rod,
Mahometans confess was sent from God ;
This they of *Jesus* own, nor stick to say,
That holy Men first spread about his way :
Yet in their *Alch'ran* many things do lie,

Diff'ring from *Moses* and the Christi'an Verity. III.
Proof against
Mahometans
from the sacred
Books of *Jews*
and *Christians*,
and that they are
not corrupted.

Here, that I may but one Example name,
That on the Cross *Christ* dy'd, *Scriptures* proclaim;
That the third day he came to Life agen,
Without delusion, seen of many Men :
O' th' other side by *Mahomet*, 'tis said,
That he was privately to Heav'n convey'd,
Upon the Cross th' Effigies only laid.

The Death of *Christ* he plainly thus denies,
And would not have the *Jews* believe their Eyes :

Th' Objection can no other Answer bear,
But that the Books remain not what they were, }
The contrary to which we've made appear. } Vid. lib. 3.

If any this against their *Alch'ran* urge,
The bare denial would be thought to purge ;
But they for that can ne're such proofs pretend,
As have been shewn on holy Writ t' attend :
As that it soon throughout the World did pass,
Not in a single Tongue (as th' *Alch'ran* was).
Faithfully kept by each divided Sect,
Who one anothers Frauds must needs detect.
Christ's welcome Promise, enter'd by *St. John*,
To send the *Comforter* when he was gone,
Mahometans suppose t'have curtail'd been,
That something there of *Mahomet* was seen ;

But

Of the Truth of

But that the Christi'ans to suppress this Light,
 Blotted the passage of malicious flight;
 On which this Question may an Answer need,
 Was't after *Mahomet*; or did precede?
 After it could not be, since then were found
 Copies dispers'd throughout the World t' abound,
 The *Greek*, the *Syriac*, *Arabick*, were known,
Ethiopic, and in *Latin* more than one:
 But in that place these all are known t' agree,
 Nor can we the least various Version see:
 No cause of change before that could be thought;
 None could foresee what would by him be
 taught.

Tho nothing contrary to Christ he brought;
 Who can of those who follow Christ believe;
 They should the Books of *Mahomet* receive
 Before what *Moses* and the Hebrew Prophets
 leave.

Suppose on neither side a Writing were; (clear,
 That might what Christ or *Mah'met* taught de-
 Reason would teach that that for Christ's should
 pass,

Which that esteem among the Christians has,
 For *Mahomet*'s that, which so his Foll'wers take.

IV.
 A Comparison
 of Jesus, and of
 Mahomet.

Of both now the Comparison let's make,
 While we the Adjuncts and Affections view,
 Whence which deserves the preference we may
 First for the Authors; th'other side agree; (stew.
 Men did in Jesus that Messiah see,
 Of whom the Promise in the Law did pass, Chas,
 The Word of God's his Name; which *Mah'met*
 Vary'd to *Wisdom*, and the *Filiat Mind*:
 That he no Earthly Father had, is joyn'd;
 While *Mahomet* was got the common way,
 As the most zealous of his Foll'wers say,

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Long was rapaci'ous, ever too inclin'd,

To satiate his warm lust with Woman-kind.

Mahomet owns *Jesus* t'ascend the Skies;

Under his Tomb himself a Relick lies;

Who cannot see which most we ought to prize?

Compare their Deeds: ev'n *Mahomet* does own,

That *Christ* t'endue the Blind with Sight was

known;

V.
And of their
Deeds.

To Cripples he the use of Feet did give,
And made the Dead with Breath recall'd to live.

Th'other for Miracles urges Alarms,

And thinks to prove his Mission by his Arms:

Yet they who after him his Rules imbibe,

What they call Miracles to him ascribe;

But either they from human Art might move,

As what is story'd of th'attendant Dove,

Or such as by no Witnesses they prove;

As that a Camel spake to him by Nights,

Or what against all Sense absurdly fights,

As that upon him part o'th'Moon was found,

Which he return'd to fill a starry round.

Who will not say, that when Disputes arise,

That Law is to be chose where one deservs

That clearest proof of sacred Sanction lies.

Let us observe what sort of Men were they,

Who first took up the one, or t'other way.

Christians the World, Men fearing God, did

Of Innocence unsully'd from below: (know,

And with God's Goodness how can it agree,

To suffer such to drown in Error's Sea,

Cheated by Words of the most specious shew,

Or Deeds seeming miraculous to view?

Who first for *Mahomet* their Notions chang'd,

Were Robbers, even from Humanity estrang'd.

VI.
Of them who
first receiv'd ei-
ther Religion.

Mark

VII.
Of the means by
which either
Law was pro-
pagated.

Mark then the manner, in which each was found
To propagate the Rule he did propound :
Christ's was not spread by Miracles alone,
Grew by their Suff'rings who the Cross did own,
Neither of these *Mahometans* can boast,
Miracles wrought, Lives for their Doctrines lost :
But their Religi'on with their Arms encreast,
A meer accessi'on unto them at best ;
Their mighty Empire and in Wars success,
Their Teachers as the pow'rful Motives press,
Than which can nothing more fallacious be :
Them to oppose the Ethnick Rites we see,
Which *Persians*, *Macedonians*, *Romans*, spread,
Conquest attending where they Armies led,
Their thriving Limits stretch't out vastly far :
The *Turks* were oft prosperous in War ;
By Sea and Land how often were they beat ?
How forc'd in *Spain* to quit their ancient seat ?
What is so mutable a doubtful Chance,
Which now the Good, now does the Bad advance,
Can be no standard by which one may shew,
Which is the false Religion, which the true ?
And that the less, since we can rarely find,
That they the Justice of their Arms will mind,
These often they injuriously extend,
Where they no Provocation can pretend,
Unless that they would strive this way t' enlarge
The bounds of Truth committed to their charge ;
Thus hood-wink'd Zeal should for those Deeds
atone,
Than which nothing's more irreligi'ous known :
God's Worship in the Will is known to lie,
Which who so forces, takes away the Tie ;
This may be wrought upon by gentle ways ;
Tis not of Will when one by force obeys :

Where

the Christian Religion:

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Where ever Profelytes such means do gain,
 'Tis not that they believe, but poorly feign,
 To shun the present, or impending pain :
 Who does by Violence Assent compel,
 Therein the weakness of his Cause does tell,
 Yet they themselves take this pretence away,
 For many People subject to their sway,
 Have an Indulgence for their former way.
 Nor do *Mahometans* scruple to own,
 Men may be sav'd trusting in Christ alone.

Let's next the Precepts mutually compare :
 One teaches greatest Injuries to bear,
 And take our Enemies into our care ;
 Th'other usurps upon the Right divine,
 While it Retaliation does enjoyn.
 The Nuptial Band one renders ever fast,
 And checks ev'ry occasi'on of distaste,
 The other makes it but on pleasure last :
 The Husband does what he would have his Wife,
 Leading with her an undivided life ;
 By his Example teaches single Love,
 More, there allow'd, to lust Incentives prove.
 This calls Religi'on inward to the Mind,
 That it may bring forth Fruits worthy Mankind :
 That does its force in Circumcision spend,
 With other things which to no good do tend.
 This yeilds the temp'rate use of Meat and Wine,
 There 'tis prohibited to eat of Swine ;
 Wine too, the Gift of God, is there deny'd,
 Tho thence, provided Moderati'on guide,
 Body and Mind are with fresh Spir'its supply'd.
 No wonder if before the perfect Law,
 Men Childish Rudiments as previous saw :
 When from the Sun God did the Clouds with-
 draw,

VIII.
*Of the Precepts
 respectively.*

*Vengeance is
 mine, &c.*

K

And

And Men its open Glories might discern,
 Preposi't'rous 'twere to Figures to return:
 Since Christ's Relig'ion Men must perfect own,
 What ground for adding to it can be shown?

IX.

*Answer to the
 Mahometans Ob-
 jection against
 the Son of God.*

Warmly *Mahometans* urge in dispute;
 That to the Godhead we a Son impute;
 When yet a Wife was never to him join'd:
 As if the name of Son in God sublim'd,
 Something far more divine we did not find,
 Than th'acceptation when to Man confin'd:
 Besides a Female partner of his Love (prove,
 Would much more worthy of the Godhead
 Than many things which *Mahomet* has told,
 As that his Hand is beyond measure cold,
 Experienc'd by himself who did it hold:
 That in a Chair he's carry'd up and down,
 With other things which Reason must disown.
 We, who the Son of God, blest Jesus call,
 On an Idea no less sacred fall,
 Than he, where he the *Word* of God does name:
 And as an Offspring from his Mind it came.
 Add here the Spir'it supply'd a Father's force,
 A Virgin bore him against Nature's course:
 Him God did visibly to Heav'n translate;
 These things does *Mahomet* himself relate;
 All which evince that in peculiar way,
 That he's the Son of God, we may, and
 ought to say.

X.

*Many absurd
 things in the
 Mahometan
 Book.*

Beyond due bounds it would this Treatise swell,
 Did we of all those idle Fables tell,
 Which in the *Alchoran* are known t'abound;
 As that some Angels, while the Cups went round,

And

the Christian Religion.

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And a fair Virgin sat attentive by,
 Taught her a Song with which to mount the Sky;
 That oft she thither went with this inspir'd,
 At last unto an higher flight being fir'd,
 There caught by God was turn'd to a fixt Star;
 That this was *Venus*, Pattern to the fair.
 That while the World liv'd in a single House,
 The Elephantine Dung brought forth a Mouse:
 And that a Lions Breath produc'd a Cat:
 Nor, surely, less ridiculous is that,
 Where he of a scape-Ram does Wonders tell,
 Hung in the middle between Heav'n and Hell,
 Which carries on its back Death's murdering
 stores;

And of excerning Banquets through the pores:
 That each should have his Flocks of Women-kind,

For his continu'd lusts, in Heav'n assign'd:
 Their Faith in these we must a Judgment think,
 Through which into Stupidity they sink;
 Since chiefly, the bright beams of Light Divine
 About them with commanding Lustre shine.

This Argument I need no farther press.

Here not to Strangers only I address;
 But unto them, as much, who Christ profess.
 What's said already let's to use apply,
 Follow what's good, and what is noxious fly;
 While we with spotless Hands invoke his Aid,
 Who things unseen and seen equally made;
 Assur'd that all things in his Conduct share,
 And not a Sparrow falls without his Care:
 Him let's not fear who can the Body kill,
 But who can Soul and Body crush at will.
 Nor must we in the Father only trust,
 To place the like in Jesus is but just;

XI.
*An Application
 to Christians,
 who from what
 is before said are
 admonish'd of
 their Duty.*

K 2

Who

Of the Truth of

Who has obtain'd the only Name on Earth,
 Through which the state of Happiness has Birth;
 And yet in vain we call or God, or Lord,
 Unless we yeild Obedience to their Word;
 Him to a Life of Glory God will raise,
 Who does his Will, not him who loudly prays.
 Christ's holy Doctrine let's a Treasure hold,
 Exceeding far that valu'd trifle, Gold;
 Oft read those Books which shew what we believe,
 Where none can be deceiv'd, who don't them-
 selves deceive.

More faithful, more inspir'd the Pen-men were,
 Than that they'd necessary Truths forbear,
 Or wrap them up in any envious Cloud;
 Minds we must bring obsequiously bow'd,
 Which if we do, our God will nothing throw'd,
 By us to be believ'd, or hop'd, or done;
 He'l perfect this his Work in us begun,
 Will cherish and excite his growing Grace,
 A pledg of what shall crown our finish'd Race.
 From imitating Pagans let's abstain;
 First in their worshipping of Idols vain,
 Nothing in truth but Names ill Spir'its brought in,
 To make Mens very Worship prove their Sin:
 If of their Rites held sacred we partake,
 Christ's Sacrifice to us we fruitless make.
 Next let's not live in their licenti'ous way,
 Who servilely the Law of Flesh obey.
 Christians should to far nobler things aspire,
 Beyond ev'n what the Jewish Laws require,
 Or the proud Phar'ees, seeming to rise higher;
 Their Right'ousness lay but in outward things,
 Th'observing which to Heav'n none ever brings:

Heart-

Heart-Circumcision, not the work of hand,
 With true obedience to Divine Command,
 Are things in which we shall accepted stand :
 God's Spirit must without resistance move,
 And raise a living Faith working by Love :
 This shews true *Isr'aelites*, those mystick Jews,
 Who sing God's Praises, and whom he does chuse.
 Diff'rence of Meats, Sabbaths, and holy Days,
 Are shadows scatter'd by *Messiah's* Rays,
 In him we the Completion of those Types
 should praise.

Mahometism may this t'our Thoughts suggest ;
 That in the Christian Law it is exprest,
 That after Jesus many should arise,
 Who should pretend their Missi'on from the Skies.
 But tho an Angel should from Heav'n descend,
 Did he another Doctrine recommend,
 Than what Christ taught, and Miracles maintain'd,
 We should reject, and think his Errand feign'd.
 In various ways God heretofore did speak
 To them who did his Will sincerely seek ;
 At last to such his only Son he sent,
 Who did his Father fully represent,
 The perfect Image of paternal Light,
 Which in the bright Reflecti'on casts the Sight,
 The Lord and Maker of the World's great Scene,
 Whose Influ'ence still throughout the whole is
 seen.

When for our Sins he had Atonement made,
 He was immediately to Heav'n convey'd,
 Where the offici'ous Angels give him place,
 Whom with a Throne of Glory God does grace.
 Such be'ing the Author of the Law w'obey,
 For something still more noble should we stay ?

Of the Truth of

On this occasi'on we should call to Mind,
 What are the Arms Christ's Souldiers have
 assign'd,
 Not such as bloody *Mahomet* enjoyn'd ;
 Such as the Spirit'ual Warfare does require,
 To raze those holds to which our Lusts retire,
 Which to subvert God's Law boldly aspire.
 Faith would a Shield invulnerable lend,
 'Gainst all those fiery Darts the Dæmons send.
 A right'ous Life's a well-wrought Coat of Mail,
 Which in no Circumstance is known to fail :
 The hope of Happiness an Helmet proves,
 Which danger from the threatned head removes :
 Instead of Sword, the sacred Writ we find,
 Piercing the close Recesses of the Mind:
 Such Concord should unite each Christi'an Heart,
 As Christ bequeath'd when he from hence did
 part.

We should not many for our Guides receive ;
 But him, the only One from God, believe.
 Baptiz'd into his Name all Christians are ;
 Wherefore of Sects and Schisms we should
 beware,

His seamless Coat 'tis impious to tear :
 And that into this fault we may not fall,
 Th'Aposile's Dictates we should oft recal ;
 Who bids each Man be temperately wise,
 According to the measure God supplies,
 T'another's Weakness Tenderness to show,
 That we, as in one Body, may together grow.
 If more than others one has understood,
 In their Instructi'on let him make it good ;
 If yet they can't arrive to the true Sense,
 Still hope that God will farther Light dispence:

I'th'in-

Pth'int'rim let's act up to what we know ;
Our knowledg is imperfect while below,
We shall be fill'd above where the clear Foun-
tains flow.

Each in particular should have a care,
Not t'hide the Talent fallen to his share ;
But to lay out the utmost of his Pow'r,
That Men may close with Christ in happy hour ;
For this, as well as good Advice to give,
He an Example of his Rules must live ;
That of the Master they may well conceive,
Who see what Men in him alone believe ;
And they that Law may value as the best,
Whose Purity is in their Lives exprest.

If any thing which I have offer'd here,
Does under a good Character appear,
Let God, from whom it came, the Praises
bear :

And let the Sense of humane Frailty move,
At least to pardon, what you don't approve ;
Think too of time and place when this came
forth,
Rather an *Embr'yo*, than a perfect Birth.

F I N I S.



Virgil's Fourth ECLOGUE

faithfully translated.

Sicilian Muse ! let's take a nobler flight ;
 Shrubs and low *Sylvan* Scenes can't all delight, Vid. *Græc. lib. 4.*
 Yet if a Grove our Verses celebrate, Sect. 9.
 That shall become worthy a Consul's State :
 Time, i'th'appointed round, presents that Age,
 Which the *Cumean Sybil* did presage.
 The Virgin now visits the Earth again,
 And peaceful *Saturn* brings his happy Reign ;
 While a new Offspring comes down from above :
 May chaste *Lucina* but propiti'ous prove,
 And with a gentle hand forward that Birth,
 Which is to purge the Iron from the Earth,
 No Metal to allay pure Gold be'ing known :
 This is the time *Apollo* mounts the Throne.

S*icilides Musa ! paulo majora canamus.*
Non omnes arbuta juvant, humilesq; myrice.
Si canimus sylvas, sylvæ sint Consule dignæ.
Ultima Cumei venit jam carminis ætas ;
Magnus ab integro sæclorum vertitur ordo.
Jam redit & Virgo, redeunt Saturnia Regna :
Jam nova Progenies Cælo dimittitur alto.
Tu modo nascenti puero, quo ferrea primum
Desinet, ac toto surget gens aurea Mundo,
Castæ sive Lucina : tuus jam regnat Apollo.

This

Virgil's Fourth Eclogue.

This *Pollio*! shall thy Consulship adorn,
 This Age's Grace shall during that be born :
 Hence shall the joyful *Epocha* begin,
 While thou preside'st is the fall of Sin ;
 No tracts of former Guilt shall stay behind,
 Nor shall it longer terrify Mankind.
 He shall ascend unto a Life Divine,
 Where mingled with the Gods the Hero's shine ;
 Himself conspicuous above the rest :
 The Universe shall under him be blest,
 And find the Father in the Son express.
 The unforc'd Earth shall ready Tribute bring,
 At the Nativity of thee its King ;
 The blushing Berry with green Ivy twin'd,
 Th' *Egyptian* Bean, with Herbs of foreign
 kind :
 The Pails with fatning Goat's Milk shall run
 o're,
 Nor shall the Herds fear when the Lions roar.

Teq; adeo decus hoc avi, te Consule, inibit
Pollio, & incipient magni procedere menses.
Te duce, si qua manent sceleris vestigia nostri,
Irrita perpetua solvent formidine terras.
Ille Deum vitam accipiet, Divisq; videbit
Permistas Heroas, & ipse videbitur illis ;
Pacatumq; reget Patrius Virtutibus Orbem ;
At tibi prima, puer, nullo munuscula cultu,
Errantes hederas passim cum baccare tellus,
Mistaq; ridenti colocasia fundet acantho.
Ipsa lacte domum referent distenta Capelle
Ubera : nec magnos metuent armenta Leones.

Virgil's Fourth Eclogue.

139

All sorts of new-sprung Flowers thy Cradle strew,
 Counting thy Infant Tears before the Morning
 Dew.

Serpents shall die, the Poison's force decay,
 And wild Assyrian Roses cloath the way.
 But when the Hero's Praises, and the Deeds,
 Th'enlightened Youth of his dread Father reads,
 And knows the grounds from whence true Fame
 proceeds;

Corn shall enrich the Fields where none did sow,
 And chearing Grapes on common Bushes grow,
 From the hard Oak shall roscid Honey flow.
 Yet there some remnants of old Fraud shall be,
 Which shall again provoke to try the Sea,
 A num'rous Neighbourhood with Walls t'enclose,
 And vex the passive Earth with fur'wing Ploughs:
 Of a new Tiphys Stories shall be told,
 Another Argos shall cull'd Hero's hold;
 Fresh Wars shall be begun, another Troy
 Shall an Achilles feel sent to destroy.

*Ipsa tibi blandos succulentis cunabula flores:
 Ocoides & Serpens & fallax herba veneni
 Ocoides: Assyrium vulgo nascetur amomum.
 At simul Heroem laudes & facta parentis
 Jam legere, & que sit poteris cognoscere virtus;
 Mollis paulatim flavescent campus arista,
 Incultisq; rubens pendebit sentibus uva,
 Et dura quercus sudabunt roscida mella.
 Pauca tamen suberunt veteris vestigia fraudis,
 Que tentare Thetis ratibus, que cingere muris
 Oppida, que jubeant telluri insindere sulcos:
 Alter erit tum Tiphys, & altera que vehat Argo
 Detestos Heroes: erunt etiam altera bella,
 Atq; iterum ad Trojam magnus mittetur Achilles.*

But

Virgil's Fourth Eclogue.

But when thou shalt in Years become mature,
 The Sailer shall no more rough Seas endure;
 No Ships shall coast about for Foreign Ware,
 All things within it self each Realm shall bear,
 Plough-shares no more shall tear the fertile ground,
 No Pruning-hooks the bleeding Vines shall wound;
 The lab'ring Ox shall from the Yoak be free;
 Nor shall we Wool dy'd with false Colours see;
 A nat'ral Purple, or becoming Red
 Shall, as he stalks along, the Ram bespread;
 Lambs a more orient Red shall sweetly stain. }
 Such times as these the steady Fates ordain, }
 Working th'agreeing Links of the sure Chain. }
 Enjoy thy sacred Honours now in peace, (crease!
 Thou darling Son o'th'Gods! Jove's great en-
 Sec! how the tott'ring World expects thy hand,
 Made to support the Heav'ns, the Sea, and Land.

*Hinc ubi jam firmata virum te fecerit atas,
 Cedet & ipse mari vector, nec nautica pinus
 Mutabit merces: omnis feret omnia tellus.
 Non rastros patietur humus, non vinea falcem:
 Robustus quoq; jam tauris iuga solvet arator;
 Nec varios discet mentiri lana colores:
 Ipse sed in pratis aries jam suave rubenti
 Maurice, jam croceo mutabit vellera luto;
 Sponte sua sandyx pascentes vestiet agnos.
 Talia secula suis dixerunt currite fufis,
 Concordes stabili factorum numine Parca.
 Aggredere ô magnos (aderit jam tempus) honores,
 Chara Deum soboles, magnum Jovia incrementum.
 Aspicce, convexo nutantem pondere mundum,
 Terrasq; tractusq; maris, Cælumq; profundum.*

Nature

Virgil's Fourth Eclogue.

141

Nature, behold ! puts on a chearful Face,
 Finding thy Season rowling on apace.
 Oh ! that my Life and Spirit might suffice,
 To praise the Glories to which thou shalt rise :
 While full of thee I should not fear to vie
 With *Orpheus*, were the Muse his Mother by ;
 Nor *Linus*, tho *Apollo* did inspire
 His raptur'd Son with all his holy Fire.
 Should *Pan*, ev'n in his own *Arcadia* sing,
Arcadia should to me the Lawrel bring,
 By Smiles the knowledg of thy Mother gain,
 Thou perfect Recompence of all her Pain !
 Learn by the Smiles : where Parents don't rejoyce,
 No God, or Goddeſs made that Houſe their choice.

Aspice, venturo latentur ut omnia ſeclo.
O mihi tam longe maneat pars ultima vite,
Spiritus & quantum ſat erit tua dicere facta.
Non me carminibus vincet nec Thracius Orpheus,
Nec linus : huic mater quamvis atq; huic pater
Orphei Calliopea, Lino formoſus Apollo : (adſit :
Pax Deus Arcadiâ mecum ſi iudice certet,
Pan etiam Arcadiâ dicet ſe iudice vicinm.
Incipe parve puer riſu cognoscere matrem :
Matrî longa decem tulerant faſtidia menſes.
Incipe, parve puer, qui non riſere parentes,
Nec Deus hunc menſâ, Dea nec dignata cubili eſt.

APPEN-



APPENDIX.

Concerning Prophecies and Predictions, particularly the *Sibyls*, and the foregoing Translation of what *Virgil* rehearses out of the *Cumean Sibyls Verses*. Περσφιλίας 1 Thes. 5. 20.
 μὴ ἑξοθεύειν. *Despise not Prophecies* : Or rather, reckon not as if there are no true Prophecies.

CHAP. I.

Of the Importance of Prophecies for confirmation of the Christian Religion ; how the Sibylline Verses were preserved, and the Primitive Christians justified in their Appeals to them. Their Authority confirm'd, by a Passage cited as St. Paul's, by Clement of Alexandria.

OF all the Arguments excellently urg'd by *Grotius*, and but enervated by my Rythms, there is none which seems more undeniably to enforce the belief of a Deity, and the Religion which Christ Jesus taught
 Man-

Mankind, than the Evidence that there have been, at least in some Ages of the World, such Predictions as have manifested a fore-knowledge of those future Events, of which it was impossible to have the least intimation from any Cause, or Sign, appearing only by natural Light; and that such an one as the blessed Jesus, had been fore-shewn, and was accordingly expected, about that time when he first convers'd among Men.

Numbers not injudicious, may be impos'd upon with appearances seemly miraculous, either by a Confederacy, slight of hand, or natural Magick, in applying the occult Qualities of things new and strange.

But it must evidently be beyond all humane Power, to know future things in their remote Causes, the Causes themselves not existing till many Ages after; nay, where the Causes act arbitrarily, and consequently the Effects are wholly contingent.

Whether the Instruments of conveying to Mankind the notices of such things, were actuated by good or bad Spirits, is not of any Consequence here; since if they were bad, it shews the influence of a superiour Being, which makes the very Devils subservient to that Power, which was to destroy their Kingdom.

And it cannot but be look'd upon as a great Mercy and Providence of God, that he not only left witness of himself among the Jews, in those Prophecies, which sufficiently pointed out the Time, Place, Person, and Character of the *Messiah*. But that the Gentiles might have no pretence that these were Juggles, and a meer Conspiracy against their ancient and establish'd Rites,
he

Acts 14. 15.

he so ordered it, That the Roman Capitol should become a Sanctuary, and Depository of these Divine Truths; That there the Sibylline Writings, which describe that pacific Prince, who was to be born of a Virgin, so clearly, that thence is now taken the main Objection against their Authority; should be preserved with that care, which might prevent all manner of scruples with unbiass'd minds, against those mighty Testimonies to Christianity.

To those therefore the Primitive Fathers, (a) *Justin Martyr*, (b) *Clement of Alexandria*, (c) *Tertullian*, and *Origen*, even the last of which was born within the second Century, appeal'd in their Disputes with the Heathens, or Apologies for themselves. (d) *Celsus* his Objection, That the Christians had inserted many, and blasphemous things into the *Sibyls* Books, is so far from an Objection that ought to weigh with us; that it is a Confirmation of our Faith, and that those Writings contained such things of one to be born into the World, as the Heathens accounted it Blasphemy to ascribe to any but their Gods, or the great *Jove*, or *Jehova*.

Origen's Challenge, for *Celsus* to shew what the Christians had inserted, not being answered, were of it self a sufficient disproof of this Calumny: but 'tis strange it should be taken up by Christians now, especially by the Learned (e) *I. Isaac Vossius*, who in the main defends the Sibylline Writings; for what ever may have been added through the officious, or mistaken Zeal of any Christians since, 'tis highly improbable that it should have been so in *Celsus* his time, or as long as the Capitol stood, to which the Heathens

(a) *Justin* dissuades his Apology to Antoninus Pius, who began his Reign A. Christi 139. the Apology supposed to be wrote about the year 150. vide Euseb. Hist. lib. 4. c. 12. Cluv. Epit. Hist. p. 281. *Talents Tables.*

(b) *Clement* finish'd his Books under Severus, who died A. C. 212. vide Euseb. l. 6. c. 9. Cluv. p. 294.

(c) *Tertul.* contemporary with *Clement*. Vid. Cluv. p. 294. (d) v. *Origen* lib. 7. pag. 369, edit. Cant.

(e) v. *Vossius* de Sibyllinis Oraculis.

would certainly have resorted, to falsifie the Quotations made by the Christians, if they had not been exactly true. Nor can it be imagin'd how the Christians should at any time, after the birth of our Saviour, till the (b) burning of the Capitol, which was about the Year of Christ 395, be able to thrust in any spurious Copies among those which were received by the Heathens.

(b) Vid. Twissden's Disquisition touching the Sibyls, p. 178.

(c) Vid. Sueton. in vita Augusti.

For before our Saviour's birth, (c) *Augustus* had made a Collection of those Books of the *Sibyls*, which upon examination were found authentick; these were laid up in two gilded Hutches, under the foot of a Pillar in the Temple of *Palatine Apollo*, where they were preserved as the most (d) sacred Possession which they had.

(d) Dionys. Halicarn. lib. 4. Rom. Antiqu. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100. 101. 102. 103. 104. 105. 106. 107. 108. 109. 110. 111. 112. 113. 114. 115. 116. 117. 118. 119. 120. 121. 122. 123. 124. 125. 126. 127. 128. 129. 130. 131. 132. 133. 134. 135. 136. 137. 138. 139. 140. 141. 142. 143. 144. 145. 146. 147. 148. 149. 150. 151. 152. 153. 154. 155. 156. 157. 158. 159. 160. 161. 162. 163. 164. 165. 166. 167. 168. 169. 170. 171. 172. 173. 174. 175. 176. 177. 178. 179. 180. 181. 182. 183. 184. 185. 186. 187. 188. 189. 190. 191. 192. 193. 194. 195. 196. 197. 198. 199. 200. 201. 202. 203. 204. 205. 206. 207. 208. 209. 210. 211. 212. 213. 214. 215. 216. 217. 218. 219. 220. 221. 222. 223. 224. 225. 226. 227. 228. 229. 230. 231. 232. 233. 234. 235. 236. 237. 238. 239. 240. 241. 242. 243. 244. 245. 246. 247. 248. 249. 250. 251. 252. 253. 254. 255. 256. 257. 258. 259. 260. 261. 262. 263. 264. 265. 266. 267. 268. 269. 270. 271. 272. 273. 274. 275. 276. 277. 278. 279. 280. 281. 282. 283. 284. 285. 286. 287. 288. 289. 290. 291. 292. 293. 294. 295. 296. 297. 298. 299. 300. 301. 302. 303. 304. 305. 306. 307. 308. 309. 310. 311. 312. 313. 314. 315. 316. 317. 318. 319. 320. 321. 322. 323. 324. 325. 326. 327. 328. 329. 330. 331. 332. 333. 334. 335. 336. 337. 338. 339. 340. 341. 342. 343. 344. 345. 346. 347. 348. 349. 350. 351. 352. 353. 354. 355. 356. 357. 358. 359. 360. 361. 362. 363. 364. 365. 366. 367. 368. 369. 370. 371. 372. 373. 374. 375. 376. 377. 378. 379. 380. 381. 382. 383. 384. 385. 386. 387. 388. 389. 390. 391. 392. 393. 394. 395. 396. 397. 398. 399. 400. 401. 402. 403. 404. 405. 406. 407. 408. 409. 410. 411. 412. 413. 414. 415. 416. 417. 418. 419. 420. 421. 422. 423. 424. 425. 426. 427. 428. 429. 430. 431. 432. 433. 434. 435. 436. 437. 438. 439. 440. 441. 442. 443. 444. 445. 446. 447. 448. 449. 450. 451. 452. 453. 454. 455. 456. 457. 458. 459. 460. 461. 462. 463. 464. 465. 466. 467. 468. 469. 470. 471. 472. 473. 474. 475. 476. 477. 478. 479. 480. 481. 482. 483. 484. 485. 486. 487. 488. 489. 490. 491. 492. 493. 494. 495. 496. 497. 498. 499. 500. 501. 502. 503. 504. 505. 506. 507. 508. 509. 510. 511. 512. 513. 514. 515. 516. 517. 518. 519. 520. 521. 522. 523. 524. 525. 526. 527. 528. 529. 530. 531. 532. 533. 534. 535. 536. 537. 538. 539. 540. 541. 542. 543. 544. 545. 546. 547. 548. 549. 550. 551. 552. 553. 554. 555. 556. 557. 558. 559. 560. 561. 562. 563. 564. 565. 566. 567. 568. 569. 570. 571. 572. 573. 574. 575. 576. 577. 578. 579. 580. 581. 582. 583. 584. 585. 586. 587. 588. 589. 590. 591. 592. 593. 594. 595. 596. 597. 598. 599. 600. 601. 602. 603. 604. 605. 606. 607. 608. 609. 610. 611. 612. 613. 614. 615. 616. 617. 618. 619. 620. 621. 622. 623. 624. 625. 626. 627. 628. 629. 630. 631. 632. 633. 634. 635. 636. 637. 638. 639. 640. 641. 642. 643. 644. 645. 646. 647. 648. 649. 650. 651. 652. 653. 654. 655. 656. 657. 658. 659. 660. 661. 662. 663. 664. 665. 666. 667. 668. 669. 670. 671. 672. 673. 674. 675. 676. 677. 678. 679. 680. 681. 682. 683. 684. 685. 686. 687. 688. 689. 690. 691. 692. 693. 694. 695. 696. 697. 698. 699. 700. 701. 702. 703. 704. 705. 706. 707. 708. 709. 710. 711. 712. 713. 714. 715. 716. 717. 718. 719. 720. 721. 722. 723. 724. 725. 726. 727. 728. 729. 730. 731. 732. 733. 734. 735. 736. 737. 738. 739. 740. 741. 742. 743. 744. 745. 746. 747. 748. 749. 750. 751. 752. 753. 754. 755. 756. 757. 758. 759. 760. 761. 762. 763. 764. 765. 766. 767. 768. 769. 770. 771. 772. 773. 774. 775. 776. 777. 778. 779. 780. 781. 782. 783. 784. 785. 786. 787. 788. 789. 790. 791. 792. 793. 794. 795. 796. 797. 798. 799. 800. 801. 802. 803. 804. 805. 806. 807. 808. 809. 810. 811. 812. 813. 814. 815. 816. 817. 818. 819. 820. 821. 822. 823. 824. 825. 826. 827. 828. 829. 830. 831. 832. 833. 834. 835. 836. 837. 838. 839. 840. 841. 842. 843. 844. 845. 846. 847. 848. 849. 850. 851. 852. 853. 854. 855. 856. 857. 858. 859. 860. 861. 862. 863. 864. 865. 866. 867. 868. 869. 870. 871. 872. 873. 874. 875. 876. 877. 878. 879. 880. 881. 882. 883. 884. 885. 886. 887. 888. 889. 890. 891. 892. 893. 894. 895. 896. 897. 898. 899. 900. 901. 902. 903. 904. 905. 906. 907. 908. 909. 910. 911. 912. 913. 914. 915. 916. 917. 918. 919. 920. 921. 922. 923. 924. 925. 926. 927. 928. 929. 930. 931. 932. 933. 934. 935. 936. 937. 938. 939. 940. 941. 942. 943. 944. 945. 946. 947. 948. 949. 950. 951. 952. 953. 954. 955. 956. 957. 958. 959. 960. 961. 962. 963. 964. 965. 966. 967. 968. 969. 970. 971. 972. 973. 974. 975. 976. 977. 978. 979. 980. 981. 982. 983. 984. 985. 986. 987. 988. 989. 990. 991. 992. 993. 994. 995. 996. 997. 998. 999. 1000.

In Vopisci Aureliano juxta annum Christi 271. Vid. Formam Senatus consulti de inspiciendis fatalibus libris.

Cicero de Div. Non enim licebat ullum Carmen Populo enuntiare nisi id Senatus decrevisset.

Nay, there was great care taken that they might not be cheated with new, or false Copies; when in *Tiberius* his time, *Camillus Gallus*, one of the *Quindecimvirs*, pres'd for a Decree of the Senate, for hav'ing a Book then found, treasured among the other Writings of the *Sibyls* (whether there

Com. Tacitus in vita Tiberii, lib. 6. p. 159. 160. Ed. Planini.

there was but one, or more, *Tacitus*, who relates it, would not determine.) *Tiberius* tells him by Letter, that he was ignorant what was the ancient Custom upon such a discovery, which was, to have every Verse read and weighed in full Senate before it was received, and then the matter was to be left to the Priests, that they might use all possible humane means for discerning the true from false.

That the Christians therefore could not cheat them in this matter, and would have been disproved by authority of the Senate, if they made any false Quotations, cannot be doubted.

The only Question remaining is, How the Christians could come by any of these Writings, which were kept with so much caution, that none were admitted to them but the immediate Officers intrusted with them, nor could they publish them without a Decree from the Senate: And further yet, as it is in *Tiberius* his Letter mentioned by *Tacitus*, *Augustus* made a Law, That whenever any Copy of such Writings should occur, it should within a day be carried to the Pretor, or Mayor of the City, and that no private Person should retain any by him.

Notwithstanding all which, it is easily supposable that the Christians, and others, might have made large Collections of those Predictions which were there treasured up: And *Augustus* his Decree seems to concern only what look'd like Originals, or were Copies from other parts, of which they had nothing in the Capitol.

But in *Tully's* time the Sibylline Writings were in all peoples hands, and some seem to have

*Tacitus lib. 6.
p. 150. Sanx-
isse Augustum
quod infra di-
em ad Preto-
rem Urbanum
deferrentur,
neg; habere
privatim lic-
ret.*

(1) Cic. de made a trade of (s) telling Fortunes by them, Divinatione with the help of Lots.

lib. 1. f. 261.

Ed. per de Planches Quinc. Cicero, *speaking of the Eriethraan Sibyl*. Cujus generis oracula etiam habenda sunt, non quæ æquatis fortibus ducuntur, sed quæ instinctu divino, afflatuq; funduntur. Vid. Van. Dale p. 335. Sibyllarum fortæ datæ fere ubiq; occurrunt.

Cic. de Div.
lib. 2. f. 295.

And *Tully* takes notice of a Decree of the Senate against the reading of those Books, as obsolete, and antiquated; But thinks it reasonable that this Decree should be revived to prevent Superstition; but then there was no restraint to keep *Tully*, and the other Enquirers of that Age, from satisfying their Curiosity about these; And several of their Verses are mentioned in the Authors of those Times, agreeably to which *Lactantius*, who was born within the third Century, says, that the Sibylline Verses which the Christians then urg'd against the Heathens, were taken out of *Tully*, *Varro*, and other Ancients, who died before Christ was born.

Vid. Petav. Raz.
temp. p. 361.
Lactantius lib.
4. c. 15.

Just. Mart.
Apol. 2. p. 64.

And that these Verses were in many hand before the middle of the second Century after our Saviour, is evident in *Justin Martyr*, who imputes it to the prevalence of Devils, or *Dæmons* that the Sibylline Books, among others, were prohibited; yet, says he, "we not only" poss "them without fear, but (as you see) offer th " to your view.

Which shews that the Prohibition exten only to Men of their own Rites; and the De against the reading of them, seems to have revived to prevent the spreading of Christi: not that it was always inforc'd. *Justin*

the reading of these was made capital ; ‘ That by Just. Mart.
 ‘ fear they might turn away Men that are apt to
 ‘ believe the knowledg of Good ; and that they
 ‘ may keep them Slaves to themselves.

Upon three accounts it is easily to be conceiv’d,
 how the *Sybils* Verses should have been publick.

1. It might have been through the Treachery
 of Officers entrusted with them, who might *Vid. Short*
 have privately transcribed them, as *Attilius* did, *discourse of the*
 who was one of the two entrusted with the *truth and reason-*
 Collection then made, and for the breach of that *ableness of Chri-*
 Trust suffered as a Parricide. *stianity, Ed. An.*
1662. p. 16.

2. The occasions of consulting these Verses *Vid. Livy*
 were very frequent and numerous ; and the Ver- *throughout.*
 ses which were then made publick were, no *Tully de Div.*
 doubt, carefully preserv’d, and communicated *quoties Sena-*
 from one to another. *tus Decemvi-*
ros ad libros
ire jussit? &c.

3. Those Writings which were kept in the *Vid. Dionys.*
 Capitol before *Augustus* his time, were for the *Halicarn. lib 4.*
 most part Transcripts from what were recorded *£ 259. who*
 in several parts of *Greece* ; from amongst these *liv’d about 26*
 and others, *Augustus* made his Collection ; and *Years before*
 as it was no difficult thing to have recourse to *Christ.*
 those places, from whence any of them had been *Vid. etiam*
 transcribed ; no more was it to have sufficient *Vandale*
 Evidence, which, among the Verses so recorded, *p. 364.*
 were transcribed and carried into the Capitol. *Disquis. touch-*
ing the Sibyls,
pag. 169. Quic-
quid fatidico-
rum librorum
græci, latiniq;
generis, &c.
Suet. in vitâ
Augusti.

Upon which Considerations, I should think
 it no more strange, that many Sibylline Writings
 should be in the hands of Christians while the
 Capitol stood, agreeing with Verses there recor-
 ded, than that several Copies of any Book, should
 agree with the same Original : and as the Chri-
 stians, by quoting the *Sibyls* to the Heathens,
 shewed their assurance that the Quotations were

right, and of such Writings as the Heathens themselves received for Authorities; so their not being disproved in particular instances, shews, that that assurance was well grounded.

And this will be further evident, if any one of the Apostles at any time used their Authorities, either to Heathens, or Christians; for tho this Argument was not so necessary, that we ought to suppose the Apostles inspired to know the Contents of these Verses, before they came to their hands: Yet we cannot think, that the holy Spirit, which was to lead them into all Truth, would suffer them to quote any thing adulterate; nor is it to be imagined that any Christian then could have counterfeited these Verses, and not be discovered.

Strom. li. 5. *Clement of Alexandria*, speaking of God's
p. 3. 636. Mercy, not only to the then Christians, and Jews,
Δὲ καὶ πρὸς τοὺς Ἰουδαίους
τὸ Πνεῦμα ἡμῶν
ἐνέπνευσεν ὁ Ἄ-
γιος, ὁ ὁμιλοῦν
ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ, &c. but to the Gentiles also, and of his having raised
up Prophets among them, says, "Besides the
"Preaching of St. Peter, St. Paul manifests, or
will manifest, the same, who says,

"Observe the Sibyl how she declares one God,
"and the things which were to come: Take and
"read *Histaspes*, and there you will find it much
"more clearly and plainly of the Son of God, &c.

That this passage is not to be found among the Writings of St. Paul now extant, is not of it self of greater weight, than if any of the Primitive Christians should have mentioned some expression, or action of our Saviour's, of which a clear Tradition then ran; tho it were not recorded by any of the Evangelists: whereas St. John concluding his Gospel, says;

John 21. 25. *And there were many other things which Jesus did,*

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did, the which if they should be written every one, I suppose the World it self could not contain the Books that should be written.

'Tis evident, by the manner of the Quotation, that what *Clement* cites as *St. Paul's* words, were among them to whom he wrote, as much accounted *St. Paul's*, as any passage which he cites from *St. Peter*, was thought to be his.

So that there is no more in this Objection, than that this has not been transmitted down to us, in the same manner with the rest of *S. Paul's* Writings.

But, circumstances considered, we are not here so much as to examine whether *Clement*, who mentions this, was one of integrity; but the only Question will be, Whether he, and others of that time, might have sufficient evidence, whether any Writings, which went under the name of any Apostle, were in truth his whose name they then bore? Nor can there be any great Question of this here, if we consider, that *Clement* finish'd his Book in the time of the Emperour *Severus*, who died *Anno Christi* 212, *St. Paul* died about the Year 67 or 69; so that here were but 145 Years at the most, to preserve the Tradition, and not 100 to *Clement's* being of years of understanding; and *Polycarp*, a Disciple of one of the Apostles, lived till the year of *Christ* 168. so that, with him at least, *Clement*, and others then alive, might have conversed, and possibly with some of *St. Paul's* own Followers.

Vid. Euseb.
Clav. Epit.
Petrav.

Vid. Tallent
Tables.

To say there were no Revelations before concerning the *Messiah*, were to deny the holy *Writ* which records the Prophecies among the Jews Numb. 24. 17. nay, and that of *Baalam* the *Moabitish* Sorcerer.

Yet there is no doubt but the Apostles and Prophets under the Gospel, had a more steady Light to guide them; and herein the Sibyls seem to have been far short of the Christian or Jewish Prophets.

1. That, they themselves understood not the true meaning of what they spake in a Divine Fury.

2. Nor could they bring any Evidence to satisfy the World of the truth of what they foretold; and therefore, how clear soever the Predictions seemed by the Event, they were obscure till then, and of little or no use at first, especially in comparision with those which were uttered for the Comfort of God's People, and were often publickly attested by convincing Miracles.

3. And the People among whom they were delivered, had not those Anticipations, or Pre-dispositions, which might fit them for the receiving that Light. So that what would have brought clear Day to others, could make but a very little dawning with them, by reason of that thick Darkness which encompass'd them; and on that account their Light was to be account weak, as not able to disperse the Clouds which lay in the way; and by how much the stronger Rays were requisite; by so much were Illuminations the more imperfect.

Cic. de Div.
lib. 1.

2. The second Head observable in *Van* what he urges out of *Tully*, who, in 1

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Book of Divination, represents his Brother *Quintus* his Arguments to shew, that there was such a thing as a fore-knowledge of future Contingences; for which *Tully* owns, that he brought many (a) clear and illustrious Instances known among the Romans.

Being to answer his Brothers Arguments he says; He (b) *affirms nothing, in all things is only upon the enquiry, for the most part doubts, and distrusts himself, or his own Arguments.*

dicta; sed ita nihil ut affirmem, quæram omnia, dubitans plerumque, & mihi ipse diffidens. ib.

(a) Quodque me maxime delectat, pluribus nostris exemplis usus est is quidem claris & illustribus. Cic. de Divin. lib. 2.

(b) Dicendum est mihi igitur adeo quæ sunt à re

And that which he seems most to triumph in, is, rather a cavilling at the definition of Divination given by his Brother, than a disproving the possibility that the Gods should certainly fore-know what is to come to pass, and communicate that knowledge to Men, without destroying the nature of Contingency by any compelling necessity.

1. When he comes to object against the Authority of the Sibylline Writings, one Objection, is their obscurity, and the uncertainty of Time, Person, or the like, to which they may be applied: But in this *Vandale* and I, may say all Disputers against these since our Saviour's time, are so far from agreeing with *Cicero*, that the Objection most commonly insisted on, is, their clearness, and certainty.

2. Another is, that the Acrosticks, in which sort of Verse the Predictions, or most of them, were wrote, shew them to be rather the Effect of Art and Diligence, than of Incitation and Fury: As if that Power which inspired the Sibyl, could

Divinationem esse earum rerum prædictionem, & præsentationem, quæ essent fortuitæ. v. lib. 1. & 2.

Tully's first Objection against the Sibyls.

vid. Vandale,

pag. 39.

could not as well do it in that manner, as in one more negligent: Besides, it could not derogate from the Prediction, if the substance of what was imprinted on the Mind, from whatever Spirit, was afterwards regularly digested; if this were before what was foretold came to pass.

3. The last Objection is against the Faithfulness of the Officers, who were entrusted with this their sacred Possession.

One of the Predictions, which in *Tully's* time was pronounced as fitting for the occasion on which they were then consulted, being that mentioned by *Grotius*.

Quem re verà Regem habebamus, appellandum: quog; esse Regem si salvi esse vellemus.

‘That he who in truth was our King, ought to be called or owned for King, if we would be safe, or sav’d.

Tully, who was an Enemy to the name of King, says,

Cum Antistitibus agamus, ut quidvis potius ex illis libris quam Regem proferant:

‘Let us manage the matter so with the Officers, that they produce out of those Books any thing rather than a King.

Vandale pag.
468, 469.

Upon this *Vandale* enlarges, as if it were a meer trick of State, and that the Officers made the *Sibyls* speak what should be thought for the advantage of the Senate, to whom the Verses were to be first shewn; wherefore, says he, *Cato*, who durst not wholly tax them of Fiction, would have them seen by the People first: admit this to have been never so true, yet it can signifie nothing here, in relation to those Verses which so plainly describe our Saviour, as shews that

that they could not be counterfeited to serve any Interest of their State.

Besides, no more can be inferr'd from *Tully's* words, than that the Officers, among those which were the true Verses, took out such as they thought fit for the present occasion: nor was more implied in *Cato's* demand, which had took effect, than that 'twas reasonable the People, as well as the Senate, should have a Judgment of what was fit then to be divulg'd, lest they should be kept from the knowledg of what might be of great benefit to them: and this (c) *Dion* shews that *Cato* aimed at.

(c) *Dion. lat.*
Cato veritus ne
id supreme-
retur, &c.

But notwithstanding all that *Cicero* urges for disputation sake, I conceive his Letters to *Lentulus* shew, that he did not condemn the Sibylline Writings.

Vid. Cic. Ep.
ad Lentul. 5.

Ptolomy, King of *Egypt*, was forc'd to fly to *Rome* for Protection against his Rebellious Subjects: having been there for some time, and being made acquainted with a Prediction, which he thought fore-told, that he should be carried back into his Kingdom without Arms; he prest hard, and bribed high, to have this effected for him. *Dion*, who lived about 200 Years after, says, that it was contained in the *Sibyls* Books; 'If 'a King of *Egypt* come wanting Aid, do not deny him Friendship, but help him with no 'Forces; for if you do, you will have trouble 'and danger. And to the same purpose the Poet *Lucan*, who died *Anno Christi*, 65, had it before.

Cic. Epist. ad
Lentulum 4.

Cluv. Ep. Hist.

Haud equidem immerito Cumanæ carmine vatis *Luc. lib. 8.*
Caenum, ne Nilô Pelusia tangeret ora,
Hesperius Miles—————

The

*Th' Italian Souldiers of Egyptian Air,
Cumean Sibyl justly bids beware.*

This either was the opinion of the Priests upon the words of the Prediction, or else was the account spread after the Birth of Christ, whose carrying into *Egypt* exactly agrees with *Tully's* account of this Prediction, which was, *Vid. Ep. ad Lent. 7. infra.* That a King should be carried into *Egypt* without a multitude, and was never verified in any other, than this Spiritual King. It being thought that *Ptolemy* was the Person design'd by the Prediction, there was great striving for the Honour of executing the purpose of the Gods in carrying him home.

This *Lentulus* was very ambitious of, and had a former Decree of the Senate on his side : *Vid. Cic. Ep. ad Lentul. 7.* *Cicero* lays a project for his performing this, which was, that he should place *Ptolemy* at *Ptolemais*, or some neighbouring place, from whence he should go to *Alexandria* with a Navy and Army, and when he had settled it in peace and well garison'd it, then *Ptolemy* might return into his Kingdom. *Ita fore ut per se restitatur, quemadmodum Senatus initio censuit, & sine multitudine, reducatur, quemadmodum homines religiosi Sibyllæ placere dixerunt.*

‘ So he may be restored by you, as the Senate
‘ at first decreed, and may be brought back with-
‘ out a multitude, as the religious men said it plea-
‘ ses the Sibyl.

And what was *Cicero's* Opinion concerning this matter, appears by a passage in his fourth Epistle to *Lentulus*. *Epist. 4.*

Nemo

Nemo est qui nesciat, quo minus discessio fieret per adversarios tuos esse factum, qui nunc Populi Romani nomine, re autem verà sceleratissimo introcinio: si qua conabuntur agere satis provisum est, ut ne quid Salvis auspiciis, aut Legibus, aut etiam sine vi, agere possint.

‘No Man is ignorant that your departure is
‘stopt by your Adversaries, who use the name of
‘the People of *Rome* to cover the most infamous
‘Robbery: If they attempt any thing, sufficient
‘care is taken to make it known, that nothing
‘can be done without condemning the Prophecy,
‘and the Laws, and indeed without force.

Where he charges *Lentulus* his Opposers as the most wicked Robbers, or Invaders of that Right, which he looks upon as given him by the Prediction, and the Law, meaning the first Decree of the Senate; and tells *Lentulus* that he had acquainted the People with this.

’Tis very improbable that *Cicero* (as *Vandale* Epist. 4. Hæc tamen opinio
would have him) look’d upon Religion but as a est populi Ro-
Pretence, when he himself uses its Authority: in mani à suis in-
deed he says ’twas the Opinion of the Common vidis & obtre-
People, that Religion was but pretended in the datoribus no-
business. men inductum
fictæ Religio-

nis, non tam ut te impedirent, quàm ut nequis propter exercitiis. capi-
dicitatem Alexandriam vellet ire.

But herein is demonstration, that *Cicero* thought the Sibilline Writings sacred, in that he oppos’d *Cato*’s pressing to have the Verses relating to that occasion publish’d, as nefarious, or prophane; and of such a nature, that the fear of it diverted him from the immediate service of his Friend, as what was of much less consequence.

Nos,

Ep. ad Lent. 9. Nos, says he, *cum maxime Concilio, studio, Labore, gratiâ, de causâ regiâ niteremur*; subito exorta est nefaria *Catonis promulgatio, quæ nostrâ studia impediret, & animos a minore curâ ad summum timorem traduceret, &c.* *Catonis quidem quoquo modo sese res habeat profecto resistimus.*

‘When we were using our utmost endeavours, by Counsel, study, labour, favour, in the Cause of the King; of a sudden *Cato’s* nefarious promulgation hapned; which gave us an interruption, and diverted our minds from a less care, to a Fear of the highest nature, &c.

‘What ever is the consequence of it as to our affair, I think it my duty to resist *Cato*.

These Passages compared together, make it evident, that *Cicero* was far from condemning the Sibylline Writings: but admit he slighted them never so much, yet no Man can evade those Testimonies which he involuntarily gave to Christianity, in shewing, that before Christ was born there were Predictions preserved in the Capitol, and published in *Rome*, which spake,

1. Of a King, whom Men ought to own for their King, if they will be saved.

2. Of a King to be carried into *Egypt* without a Multitude; which could not agree with King *Ptolemy*, for he was carried thither by *Gabinus*, with a powerful Army, which beat out *Archelaus*, whom the *Egyptians* had set up for King.

Chr. Epit.
Hist. p. 215.

CHAP. III.

What is offered in the two foregoing Chapters, confirm'd by Virgil's fourth Eclogue, and the Translation of it asserted.

THAT the first was meant of the Salvation of Mankind, by one, whom all ought to own for King, can be no question to any who shall impartially consider the first Eclogue of *Virgil* in the Original, or my Essay towards a Translation of it; which, tho it lose much of the Spirit by the Transfusion, I shall here justify to be so far true, that there is nothing inserted or varied from the genuine import of *Virgil's* Expressions, to make the Prediction more plainly to denote our Saviour, than *Virgil's* account makes it.

Tho *Vandale* thinks it a meer Dream that *Virgil*, or others, were permitted the Inspection of the Sibylline Verses through *Augustus* his favour, yet elsewhere he owns, that tho the Books were not to be consulted without a Decree of the Senate; yet in *Jul. Caesar's* time the Officers made an inspection by the sole Authority or Direction of *Cesar*, who was Emperor, and Chief Pontif: And if in this the ancient course of expecting the Senate's Decree was broken, why might not *Augustus* as well break the other, and order that a private Person should have the inspection?

But however *Vandale* himself owns, that these Verses were dispers'd through all *Grecia*, *Asia*, *Africa*, and other Regions, when *Augustus* made

M

his

Vandale p. 90.

Quicquid non-
nulli somniant
p. 460.

Vandale p. 364.

his Collection; and where *Virgil* saw them is not greatly material here, but that he had seen Verses which pass'd for *Cumean Sibyl's*, and wrote to one who is presumed not to have been unacquainted with them, appears, when he says;

Ultima Cumae venit jam carminis aetas.

Vid. Tallents
Tab. Chron.

Nor can *Pollio* well be thought to have been a Stranger to the Predictions of the *Sibyls*, being the first, who, by *Augustus* his order, afterward made a publick Library at *Rome*; which must have been, as he was thought the fittest for such a charge.

The Commentators seem industriously to cast a Cloud over *Virgil's* Representation of the Prediction, which he mentions to *Pollio*: and will have it that this Poem was made to celebrate the Birth of *Pollio's* Son, that some Eclogues are applied by *Virgil* to *Pollio* himself, others to *Augustus*, the rest to the Son of *Pollio*.

Where they seem to mind neither the time when it was wrote, the manner of the Expressions, nor the contexture of the Poem, which is one of the most noble and best turn'd that *Virgil* ever wrote, they would make confused, unworthy any Man of Judgment.

Pighii Annales
Rom. f. 484.

The Poem it self shews, that 'twas composed in *Pollio's* Consulship, which was in the year 713, after the building of *Rome*, about 1400 Years before Christ, this was during the *Triumvirat* of *Cicero*, *Anthony*, and *Lepidus*; wherefore I think that there is any ground to believe *Virgil* spoke otherwise, than only of what happened in *Pollio's* Consulship, when he sa-

*Te Duce, si qua manent sceleris vestigia nostri,
Irrita perpetuâ solvent formidine terras.*

This indeed a great Poet has rendred,

“The Father banish’d Vertue shall restore, *Mr. Dreyden.*
“And Crimes shall threat the guilty World
“no more.

And the Commentators take *Te Duce*, to be the same with *Te Authore*, and that *Virgil* means either *Augustus* or *Pollio*, and the Crimes to be the Civil Wars between *Augustus* and *Anthony* at *Mutina*: whereas this was before *Octavius* took the name of *Augustus*; nor is there any thing to lead to him here: Besides, *Octavius* and *Anthony* were reconciled at least the Year before *Pollio*’s Consulship, and *Pollio* was on *Anthony*’s side while the division lasted; so that there is no colour to think that *Virgil* meant that *Pollio* was to compose the Civil War after it was over, or to impute to him the Success of the opposite Party. *V. Epit. ad Livium lib. 120.*

There were more of colour in the Supposition, *v. Virgilii* that *Pollio* being one of the three, who were appointed to divide the Lands of some, who were Criminals in opposing *Octavius* his having the Command of the Army, tho decreed by the Senate: *Virgil*, having been connived at by *Pollio*, thanks him for freeing him from the fear of what he might justly have expected to suffer; yet I question whether *Virgil* would term one the Author of what he did, as joint Commissioner with others; nor would he upon such an account say,

Perpetuâ solvent formidine terras.

As if the whole Earth were concerned in *Virgil's* Fears.

And by attending to the time when this was wrote, we find that

——— *tuus jam regnat Apollo.*

And

Besides, tuus Apollo is spoke in relation to Laro-na, Sister to Apollo.

V. Epit. ad Livium c. 134. V. Petav.

Pacatumq; reget patriis virtutibus Orbem,

could not be meant of *Augustus*, who assumed not that name till the Battel of *Actium* was over, which was about the Year of *Rome* 718, five Years after *Pollio's* Consulship, when this Poem was wrote.

2. If we observe the manner of the Expressions, we shall find, that whereas *Pollio's* Son is reputed the chief Subject of the Poem; how much soever a Poet may be allowed to strain his Characters, no Man can imagine that *Virgil* would ascribe such high and mighty things to the Son of a Consul, when he was little more than Titular, under the check of the *Triumvirs*; durst he call him the Offspring of the Gods, the great encrease of *Jove*, and suppose that he should restore the Golden Age, and that Heaven it self expects support from him? this would have been no less than *Crimen læsæ Majestatis*.

But, to put this out of Controversy, 'tis all applied to one who was expected to be born; when the Commentors will have it in celebration of *Pollio's* Son's Birth.

3. If we observe the Connexion of one Verse to another.

It

It appears that *Decus ævi*, the Grace, or Glory of that Age, who was to restore the Age of Gold, was expected to be born during *Pollio's* Consulship, that while he was Consul the Sins of Mankind were to be taken away; nor can any think it supposed to be done by any other, than by him who is called the great encrease of *Jove*, who was to ascend into Heaven, and to govern the World with his Father's Vertues, which I may well render by *expressing his Father*.

The Clouds being thus removed, these Particulars appear with a clear Light.

1. That the *Cumean Sybil* spake of a Virgin, which might then perhaps be thought meant of *Astrea*, because of the glorious things said of her, Jam redit & Virgo.

2. That there was expected a wonderful Revolution, a Restauration of the state of Innocence, or Golden Age, such as the Poets fancied to have been in *Saturn's* Reign, and in truth was under the Primitive Theocracy.

3. That this was to be at the Birth of a Man-Child, to whom are ascribed such things as no poetical License, without warrant from a Prophecy or Prediction, could excuse.

And tho I may seem to strain, where I call him (the Rythm requiring it) Earth's King, nothing less can be implied from,

*Pacatumq; reget patriis virtutibus orbem,
Aggredere, ô magnos, aderit jam tempus, honores.*

*Adspice convexo mutantem pondere mundum,
Terrasq; Tractatusq; Maris Cælumq; profundum.*

Adspice, venturo latentur ut omnia sæclo, &c.

Where

APPENDIX.

Where the Poet invites him to enter upon the appointed Honour, or Office, of governing the World, nay, and Heaven it self.

Could these things be with any colour ascribe to the Son of *Pollio*? Nay: and does he not suppose him to be more than Man, not only when he says,

*Ille Deum vitam accipiet, &c.
Chara Deum soboles——*

But more plainly, where he calls him,

———*Magnum Jovis incrementum :*

Where the Increase of *Jove* seems to shew that tho he had an Hypostasis, or Personality, distinct from the Great God, yet is one God with him, *Jove* being spread out or encreas'd, with another Person, but his Godhead undivided.

With those Divine Mysteries which *Virgil* reports from the *Sybil*, he seems to joyn some poetical Flourishes of his own, as that the Earth should pay this Infant an early Tribute of Stores; that when he grows up the Oak should yeild Honey; and that when he is arriv'd at Manhood, Nature should die the Flocks with most pleasing Colours without the help of and the like.

But I know not but another part, which interpreted of a fancied Platonical Revolution may have a truly moral Signification.

*Pauca tamen suberunt veteris vestigia fi
Alter erit tum Tiphys, &c.*

Where this may seem not so much to foretell from Prophetical Inspiration, as by a moral Judgment; that tho' former Sins were purged away, yet that would not remove the capacity of sinning, but that the same, or like Crimes and Follies, should be in the World again, till the subject of the Prophecy should come to maturity.

Hinc ubi jam firmata virum te fecerit ætas.

Which might be rendred; Till the perfect Age of the Church. And this perhaps a Millenary would apply, as a Prediction of Christ's Reign, at his return to the Earth before the general Resurrection.

But waving what may be doubtful, or wholly poetical; what has been here said, together with the account how carefully the *Sybil's* Prophecies were kept, and examined by the *Romans*, and with the Justification of the Primitive Christians in their Appeals to them; may satisfy any Man, who impartially considers, that *Virgil's* fourth Eclogue is, in the main, an account of the *Cuman Sybil's* Prediction, of such an one expected to be born about that time, as Christians maintain, and none could ever with any colour deny, the Author of their Faith to have been.

That this account was wrote before the Birth of our Saviour, can be no question, unless we will think that some Christian, was not only Poet good enough to counterfeit *Virgil's* Vein, but had the art to slide it in so well, and so early, that none should be able to discover the Cheat, by shewing any Copies wherein this was omitted. And besides, all this Artifice would have been

been to no purpose, unless at the same time he could have prevailed upon the Keepers of the Sybilline Writings in the Capitol, to let some Verses be foisted in to countenance the matter.

For tho this Account was given by *Virgil* before *Augustus* made his Collection; yet we should have heard of it before now, if there had been nothing in the Capitol to warrant *Virgil's* Quotations.

And in truth, the lewd Interpretations which have been put upon this Poem, shew, that 'twas thought more easy to cast a blind, by making *Virgil* write with unallowable poetical License, and without any manner of coherence, than to gain Credit in the denial that this Poem was *Virgil's*. If they believ'd their own Interpretations; we may well say, 'twas because they thought of no Person to whom they might apply the Character, which no Man, after reading the Scriptures, and *Grotius*, can deny to belong to our Saviour, and to him only.

FINIS.











